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THE LIVES

OF

EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,

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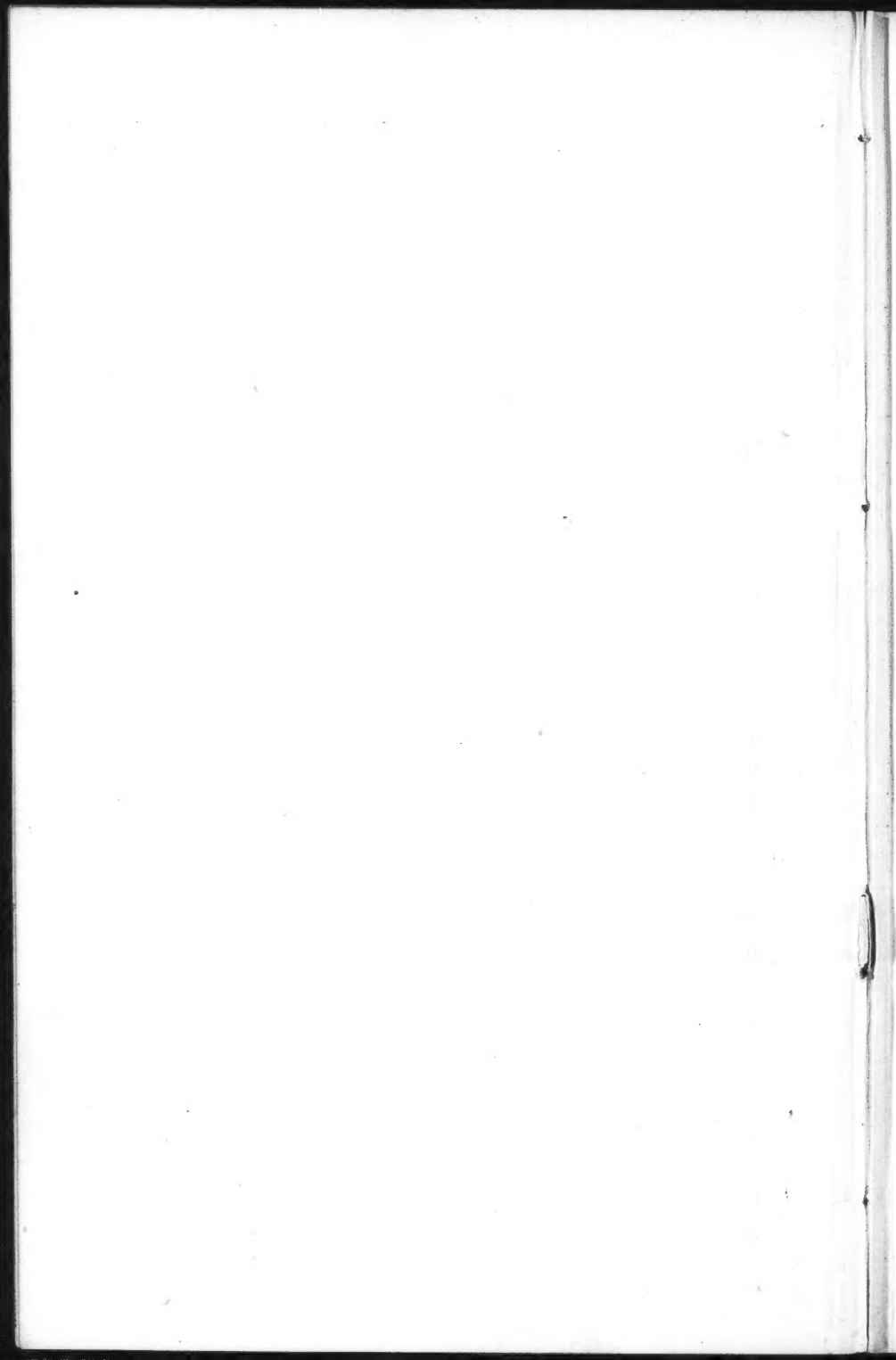
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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

“THERE are many devices in a man’s heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.” (Prov. xix. 21.) This maxim of inspired wisdom receives a striking illustration in the personal history of the Rev. John and Charles Wesley. These eminent men were trained in the belief and practice of the strictest churchmanship ; so that they would have thought it a sin to deviate from the rubric, to conduct public worship in an unconsecrated place, or to countenance the ministrations of a man on whose head the hands of a prelate had never been laid. Yet these very men were so controlled by the providence and grace of God, as to be a means of introducing, and that upon an extensive scale, a freedom of religious action, such as had scarcely been witnessed in any country since the apostolic age.

In them an exact adherence to ecclesiastical order was connected with defective and even erroneous views of Christian godliness, as it is described in the New Testament. They placed before themselves a high standard of personal sanctity, including purity of heart, the uninterrupted exercise of self-denial, the utmost rectitude of speech and action, combined with zealous efforts to do good both to the bodies and

souls of men. In attempting to attain to this state of conformity to the will of God, they directed their special attention to the precepts and example of Christ, but with only an inadequate recognition of His priestly office and character. They did not, indeed, deny the fact that He died as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and ever lives to plead the merit of His death in behalf of sinners upon earth; but they did not with sufficient explicitness regard His mediation as the only ground of their acceptance with God. To the real nature and the appointed method of a sinner's justification, their attention was seldom, if ever, directed; and much less had they any just conception of the connexion between the forgiveness of sin and personal sanctification. Entire devotedness to God was the one object of their desire and aim; supposing that their sins would be forgiven in the hour of death, or in the day of judgment; but upon what ground, or in what manner, they knew not, and forbore to inquire. The thought, that they must be delivered from the curse of the violated law of God, before He would impart the Holy Spirit to them in the fulness of His sanctifying power, appears never to have entered their minds.

In this state they were found by Peter Böhler, a pious evangelist from Germany, according to their own confession,

“Lost, and confused, and dark, and blind;”

working in chains; striving against sin, and yet enslaved by it; seeking rest for their souls, not by

simple faith in the blood of the cross, but as it were by the works of the law. By this enlightened stranger they were taught to come to Christ as mere sinners; guilty, to be forgiven; miserable, to be made happy; assured that in this manner they would obtain full and free acceptance with God, be filled with peace and joy, love God from a sense of His love to them, and be delivered from the bondage of sin both in heart and life.

These seasonable instructions they gratefully accepted, and immediately realized their truth. From this time their spiritual enjoyments were rich and abounding. They understood the Holy Scriptures as they had never understood them before; and they longed to make known to others the nature, value, high importance, and the appointed method, of the salvation which they themselves enjoyed. From the pulpits of the metropolitan churches they immediately began to preach, with becoming warmth and earnestness, the doctrine of present salvation from sin by faith in Christ crucified; and thousands of people flocked to hear the joyful tidings, which not a few of them received in the love of the truth. But to the generality of the clergy and the parochial authorities the doctrine was unwelcome; and the heat which was caused by the presence of eager crowds was annoying to the regular church-goers; so that the pulpits were at once closed against the brothers, whose teaching was as strange to the ears of London as was that of St. Paul to the Athenians, and that of the Protestant Reformers to the people of

their day. Their doctrine was charged with novelty though it had been taught by the martyrs of Smithfield, as well as by the apostles of Christ, and was embodied in the formularies of the national Church.

With their strong conviction of the truth of what they taught, confirmed by deep personal experience, it was impossible that they should remain silent, commissioned as they felt themselves to be by the Great Head of the church. The only resource that was left to them was the open air; and, therefore, in fields, under the wide canopy of heaven, they took their stand, called sinners to repentance, and offered to all who obeyed the call a full, free, and present salvation. They met with most encouraging success; so that, in a short time, of some thousands it might be said,

“They have heard the glad sound, they have liberty found
Through the blood of the Lamb,
And plenteous redemption in Jesus’s name.”

To an intelligent observer, who was duly attentive to the signs of the times, it must have appeared manifest, that a ministry different in many respects from that which then prevailed in England would speedily appear. The people who received the doctrine of present salvation from the guilt, the misery, and the dominion of sin, freely obtained by faith in Christ crucified, and who realized its truth in their own happy experience, would desire in perpetuity to hear the same doctrine, and other essential verities connected with it. Never would they be satisfied with

sermons which treated only of moral duties, and which failed to present either evangelical motives, or spiritual privileges and blessings. A craving for intellectual food, adapted to their present religious state, was created in them, and must be gratified. When St. Paul and Barnabas preached "the word of this salvation" in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, the generality of the Jews rejected the gracious message; but the Gentiles, under the influence of better feelings, earnestly "besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." (Acts xiii. 42.) So the Methodist converts, to whom the teaching of the Wesleys was the power of God unto salvation, desired to hear the same truth "the next Sabbath," and the Sabbath after that, to the very end of life.

But where could they hear it? Not in the parish-churches, except in some rare cases; nor in Dissenting meeting-houses, where many of the congregations listened to an ultra-Calvinism, or to an Arianized Gospel, which acknowledged no propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and no sanctifying Spirit. Whereas the Methodist converts could be satisfied with nothing less than the Gospel in its integrity, as they had heard it from the lips of the zealous and gifted brothers, but whom they could only occasionally hear; these faithful men extending their labours to the neglected masses of England, from the Land's-End to the Tweed. It was clear, then, that Methodism must have a ministry of its own; a ministry recognising the redemption of all mankind by the death of the incarnate Son of God, and offering to the vilest and the worst a salva-

tion free as the air they breathed. Christians are to live by faith, and to walk by faith. But "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" and faith is sustained, increased, and perfected by the same means. The Methodist converts yearned for a ministry which would stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, setting before them, as a common privilege, the abiding witness of personal adoption, progressive and entire sanctification, and the means by which they might make their calling and election sure.

But how could such a ministry be obtained? This question, it would appear, Mr. John Wesley, with all his sagacity and foresight, had never duly considered. He had been educated in the belief that no man is authorized to preach the Gospel but under the direct sanction of a diocesan prelate, the imposition of whose hands is essential to a valid ordination. This prejudice he was at length compelled to abandon. From among his own spiritual children, the members of his own societies, it pleased God to raise up such a ministry as was needed; just as He raised up pastors and teachers in the apostolic churches. This unexpected phenomenon first appeared in the person of Thomas Maxfield, a member of the society connected with the Foundery in London. He was a young man of deep piety, and acceptable talents, full of holy zeal, and greatly beloved by the people. With their approval, and in the absence of the Wesleys, he began to preach, probably urged by others beyond his own first intention. The

report of this strange thing reached the ears of Mr. John Wesley, who hastened to London to check what he regarded as a sinful irregularity. His mother then resided at the Foundery; and observing anxiety bordering upon consternation depicted in his countenance, she inquired the cause, and received the answer, "Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher, I find!" She looked attentively at him, and replied, "John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself." He took this wise counsel, and confessed to discerning in the youthful evangelist Divine qualifications and a Divine call. Mr. Wesley's case resembled that of St. Peter, when he was called to an account for eating with men uncircumcised, and settled the dispute by saying, "What was I, that I could withstand God?" It was a happy day for England, and for the world, when Thomas Maxfield ascended the pulpit of the old Foundery, under the sanction of this wise "mother in Israel," to whose judgment her devoted son had always paid a respectful deference.

The case of Maxfield, though the first in order, was not peculiar. Other men, about the same time, residing in different places, without any concert or mutual understanding, were affected in the same manner, and prompted to the same course of action.

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Among these were John Nelson, Thomas Richards, and Thomas Westell; and from that time one society after another furnished a succession of willing labourers, who were known as "lay preachers;" being thus distinguished from the men who were episcopally ordained. A part of these men remained at home, supporting themselves and their families by manual labour; and others placed themselves at the disposal of Mr. Wesley, who sent them into circuits, which were gradually formed as fields of evangelical toil and enterprise. Generally speaking, the men who were thus unexpectedly raised up were men of strong understanding, of established piety, of earnest zeal, of intrepid courage, and deeply affected by the ignorance and open profanity of the people by whom they were surrounded. They knew from experience that there is in the Gospel a remedy for all the evils and miseries of the world, and longed to make Christ and His salvation known. They saw everywhere "Christian savages, wild as untaught Indians."

When they offered themselves to Mr. Wesley, to serve him as sons in the Gospel, he requested from each of them a written account of his early life, including the time and circumstances of his conversion, and the manner in which he was led to preach the Gospel of Christ. Many of the plain and unpretending narratives thus acquired, he published in the *Arminian Magazine*, from which they have been transferred to the ensuing volumes. To these autobiographies are added the lives of some other

men, written by their contemporaries and friends. From these authentic records it will be seen what kind of men they were whom Mr. Wesley associated with himself, as "fellow-helpers to the truth," especially in the earlier years of his career as the apostle of Methodism.

With respect to these worthies, it is observable that their religious convictions generally began in early life. Their consciences were awakened; thoughts of death, of judgment, and of eternity, often occupied their anxious attention; they felt that they were sinners, but knew not how to obtain either forgiveness or a clean heart. They formed resolutions of amendment again and again; and as often violated their vows, till they were ashamed and afraid to appeal to God's mercy; and were thus made to see and feel their utter helplessness and depravity. After many inward conflicts and misgivings, their convictions of guilt, and of the sinfulness of their nature, became more deep and agonizing; and in the extremity of their grief they sought and found relief by faith in Christ, whose blood they believed to be shed in sacrifice for their sins. In this manner they passed from death unto life. The change was great, and was matter of personal consciousness. It was a transition from guilty fear to peace and reconciliation; from spiritual darkness and bondage to light and liberty; from the dread of future misery to confidence, and the joyous hope of eternal life. They were thus prepared to sympathize with the wants and miseries of sinners,

lost and undone, and qualified to unfold the means of effectual relief. They sang and taught their people to sing,

“What we have felt and seen

With confidence we tell.”

Full of love to Christ, and of zeal for His glory, and pitying the people around them, dead in trespasses and sins, and in danger of everlasting perdition, they at first took an earnest part in prayer-meetings and other means of grace. Thoughts of preaching then occurred to their minds, or were suggested by their friends. At first these thoughts were repelled as unwelcome. The difficulty of the work, the fearful responsibility connected with it, and a painful sense of unfitness, induced them to shrink from the task, till they felt that they could not delay any longer without incurring the guilt of disobedience to the call of God.

“How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?” is a question proposed by Mr. Wesley; and the answer given is, “Inquire, 1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they fruit? Are any

truly convinced of sin and converted to God by their preaching?—As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost.”

Thus sanctioned by this venerable man, under whose direction they engaged to act, they went forth in the name of the Lord. Each of them was provided with a horse, and a pair of saddle-bags, containing his Bible, his Hymn-Book, and his wardrobe. Thus equipped, taking with them nothing but spiritual armour, every one was “valiant for the truth.” The circuits, in the first instance, were of wide extent, sometimes one of them embracing even two or more counties. The journeys of these itinerant evangelists were long, their accommodations poor and uninviting, and their fare often scanty, and of the plainest kind. For some time they had no chapels in which to preach, and no societies to give them an affectionate welcome. Chapels and societies were the effects of their ministry, not accommodations provided beforehand. Their dress was plain, but respectable, though their coats were sometimes threadbare. Those of them who were at all advanced in years wore large wigs, and three-cornered hats, such as were then common among professional men; so that they were easily recognised as they passed through the towns and villages, where they were often saluted with hootings, and more formidable expressions of hostility.

They were instructed by Mr. Wesley not merely

to go to those places that wanted them, and gave them a friendly invitation, but to those who wanted them the most,—the people that were brutally ignorant and wicked. Often did they visit towns and villages of this description, unaccompanied by a single friend, taking their stand upon a horse-block, or by the side of a wall, so that no sons of Belial might get behind them and mar the service. They began by singing a hymn, which was an invitation to the people. On some occasions the congregations were quiet and respectful, though suspicious both of the preacher and his doctrine; but in not a few cases the man of God, who in pure charity had come to warn them of the fearful consequences of a life of sin, and to show them the way of salvation, met with opposition the most determined, and escaped at the hazard of his life. When St. Paul preached to the “men of Athens” upon Mars’ Hill, “some mocked,” treating the Gospel message with contempt and ridicule; others were undecided, saying, “We will hear thee again of this matter.” “Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed.” And so it was among the riots of early Methodism. While scoffers uttered their blasphemies, and men of a worldly spirit, though partially convinced of the truth, refused to hazard their reputation or their personal safety; in not a few places the hearts of others “clave” to the preacher, received the truth, requested further instruction in order to their peace and salvation, and agreed to meet together as a religious society. Their number might be small, and

the cause for a time feeble and unpromising; but the members held on their way, were faithful to Christ and to one another, and in time became an efficient centre of evangelical operation.

In places where the preachers met with the most formidable opposition; where no one offered them entertainment, or appeared to receive the truth; where clergymen stimulated the rioters, and magistrates refused to interfere; these soldiers of the cross were not disheartened. They returned again and again to the conflict, and forced the Gospel upon the attention of an unwilling people; till its adversaries, subdued by the power of truth and love, espoused the cause which they had sworn to destroy. Some of the localities in which the fiercest conflicts were held have long been among the most fruitful fields of Methodistic toil, having yielded abundant harvests of souls, fitted for the heavenly garner. The preachers themselves could not complain of the persecutions they endured; for both the Wesleys were quite willing to hazard their lives among the rudest masses of ignorant and violent men, and endured their full share of rough and cruel treatment; the gowns and bands in which they appeared affording them no protection against murderous violence.

Mr. Wesley's care for his preachers was tender and incessant. He carried on a regular correspondence with them; and his letters to them, though brief, were instructive and encouraging. He counselled them in their difficulties, and stimulated them

to higher enterprises by his own example, and by reminding them of the source whence all spiritual strength is derived. He invited them to his yearly Conference, where they saluted each other, where their spirits were refreshed, and they were girded anew with holy ardour for the work to which their lives were devoted. He did more. He provided suitable books for their use; he advised them as to their course of reading, and the improvement of their time; the character and length of their sermons; their public prayers; their personal conduct; the care of the young; the regulation and government of the societies; and the means of advancing in personal religion, without which their public ministrations, he knew, would be insipid and powerless. He warned them against dilatoriness and affected delicacy, and admonished them to be examples of early rising, of punctuality, and diligence. The rules which he laid down for their use, and which are contained in the Minutes of the several Conferences, reflect the highest honour upon his judgment and fidelity, and, as a code of morals, adapted to the ministers of Christ, for practical wisdom, have never been surpassed in any age, or in any branch of the catholic church.

The consequence was, that the men who remained in connexion with him became a body of intelligent and effective preachers, and pastors of the flock; orthodox, self-denying, laborious, and successful. They were no reeds shaken with the wind; but men

having a fixed purpose, bent upon the fulfilment of their mission, and regardless of everything beside. They were not ambitious to deliver what some regard as finished discourses, with a courtly accent, in polished sentences, nicely prepared according to the strictest rules of art, and then committed to memory, or read from a manuscript. They were above all that. But they could from the fulness of their hearts declare the truth as it is in Jesus, in good Saxon English, which all could understand and all could feel. They could deliver the Gospel message in the open air, under the rays of a burning sun, in a shower of rain, under flakes of snow, and the arrowy sleet. They could stand before fierce mobs, "unmoved, unterrified;" with calm self-possession they could preach the word in the presence of scoffers making wry mouths before them, uttering irritating jibes, and within the sound of loud laughter. When occasion served, they could "answer a fool according to his folly," and make even the impudent ashamed. In this manner they "turned the battle to the gate;" they changed the tide of public opinion, and won for their successors that respect for religion, and for religious teachers, which now generally prevails in the land.

What these men were as preachers, the effects which attended their labours amply declare. Some of them attained to eminence in sacred scholarship, so as to be able successfully to cope with the advocates of a subtle infidelity, or of heretical opinion; and the less gifted of them could, at any time,

explain the nature and method of salvation with an accuracy, precision, and impressiveness which the most erudite theologian could not excel. "In the one thing which they profess to know," said Mr. Wesley, "they are not ignorant men. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through such an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the University, (I speak it with sorrow and shame, and in tender love,) are able to do."

Up to the time of his conversion, it would appear that Mr. Wesley was accustomed to read his sermons from the pulpit; but when he had found peace with God, "straightway the string of his tongue was loosed," so that he laid aside his papers, and preached out of the fulness of his heart, which was richly charged with Gospel truth, and all on fire with holy zeal. He studied his sermons beforehand, that he might thoroughly understand the subjects that he intended to bring before the people; but he neither committed them to memory, nor read them from a manuscript. In this respect the men whom he associated with himself in the ministry were expected to follow his example, as his mode of examining them distinctly proves. He accepted them as preachers, and not readers, of the Gospel. There may be cases in which it is proper to read a sermon in a Methodist chapel; but such cases are extremely rare; and if ever reading should become the general practice, Ichabod may be written in the front of

every pulpit: The glory of Methodist preaching is departed.*

* "We do not find that St. Paul and the other apostles imposed upon themselves the troublesome servitude of penning down their discourses. And we are well assured that when the seventy and the twelve were commissioned to publish the Gospel, no directions of this nature were given in either case.

"St. Paul gives the following pastoral instructions to Timothy:— 'Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them. Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.' (1 Tim. iv. 13-16.) 'Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.' (2 Tim. iv. 2.) Now, had it ever entered into the mind of the apostle that it would be proper for pastors to compose their sermons in the manner of rhetoricians, and to deliver them as public orators, he would most probably have given some intimation of this to his disciple. In such case, he would have held out to his pupil in divinity some instruction of the following nature:—'O Timothy, my son, I have frequently commanded thee to labour in the work of the Lord according to my example; but as thou art not an apostle, properly so called, and hast not received the gift of languages, I advise thee to write over thy sermons as correctly as possible. And after this, do not fail to rehearse them before a mirror, till thou art able to repeat them with freedom and grace; so that when thou art called upon public duty, thou mayest effectually secure the approbation of thine auditors. Furthermore: when thou art about to visit any distant churches, lay up in thy portmanteau the choicest of thy sermons; and wherever thou art, take care to have, at least, one discourse about thee, that thou mayest be prepared against any sudden emergency, and never appear unfurnished in the eyes of the people.' The idea of such a passage in the Epistles of St. Paul, whether public or private, is too absurd to be endured."—Fletcher's Portrait of St. Paul.

Preaching is a means to an end; and unless the end be attained, the sermons delivered are a failure, whatever amount of learning and eloquence they may display. The Gospel ministry was instituted by Jesus Christ; and the end which He intended to secure by it He distinctly specified in the commission which He gave to St. Paul, when he said, "Depart;.....for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." According to these impressive words, the purpose of the evangelical ministry is the illumination of the dark minds of ignorant and erring men, so that they may see their guilty, miserable, and ruined condition, with the nature and means of their recovery,—their reformation, so as to be effectually turned from the love and practice of sin, and from the dominion of the wicked one, to Christ and to God, in penitence and faith; that, being thus turned, they may receive the forgiveness of all their past sins, and the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit; so that, when their earthly pilgrimage shall end, they may share with all the sanctified people of God in the joys and glories of the heavenly inheritance. That these high and holy objects were accomplished by God's blessing upon the ministry of the early Methodist preachers, is an indubitable fact. Not only were large numbers of people in every part of Great Britain and Ireland

changed as to their outward conduct, but made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Their tempers, dispositions, and habits became holy and upright, so that they were conformed to the precepts and example of the Son of God. They were good husbands and wives, good parents and children, good masters and servants, good neighbours, good citizens, good subjects; benevolent, peaceful, and just. They were contented in poverty; meek, condescending, and humble in prosperity; their families were the abodes of sanctified affection; and when they died, they died in the Lord; happy, resigned, and full of immortal hope.

Men whose preaching produced effects like these were undeniably "able ministers of the New Testament;" and their power was not confined to the pulpit. It was also put forth in the closet. They were mighty in dealing with the consciences of their hearers, because they were no less mighty in prayer. Like wrestling Jacob, they had power with God, and prevailed with Him to put forth, in connexion with their ministry, the awakening and converting energy of His Spirit.

The biographies of many of these excellent men are once more submitted to the consideration of the Methodists generally, and especially to those who have succeeded them in the ministry. From those venerated men the Methodist preachers of the present age have received, in trust for the world's benefit, a good deposit of doctrine and discipline, which it is hoped they will maintain inviolate, and

transmit to the next generation in unimpaired efficiency. Few attempts have been made to innovate upon the theology of the Connexion since its founder went to rest; but many and strenuous have been the efforts to subvert its discipline, by divesting the ministry of its pastoral character, but hitherto without success. But of what avail is the maintenance of discipline in principle and theory, unless it be maintained in practice? Mr. Wesley required all his sons in the Gospel to uphold a strict discipline in every society, repressing all mere formality, negligence, and sin, as hindrances to the advancement of true spiritual religion; and under his sanction and advice the old preachers enforced a constant attention to rule, so as to preserve a marked distinction between the church and the world,—between the society and people who satisfied themselves with a bare attendance upon the ministry of the word. Strangers were not allowed to be present at society-meetings and lovefeasts, as a matter of course, but only occasionally, and under stringent regulations; and certainly the same line of distinction ought to be observed in respect of the Lord's supper, which is now generally administered in the Methodist chapels. Persons who trifled with the class-meeting, Mr. Wesley peremptorily directed, after due warning and admonition, to be excluded, aware that negligence in the use of this weekly means of grace betokens spiritual declension, which, when it is tolerated, usually increases, and may soon spread through a whole society. When people have lost

their spiritual enjoyments, so that they have scarcely anything to say to the glory and honour of God; and when their love for each other has waxed cold, so that they have little pleasure in social intercourse, and still less in acts of prayer and praise; the class-meeting is irksome, and excuses for non-attendance are eagerly sought for and invented. The old preachers, trained and advised by Mr. Wesley, thought that societies are not increased, nor is religion advanced, by tolerating negligence and formality, but by the enforcement of a salutary discipline; not in a spirit of harshness and severity, but of loving zeal, which gives faithful and affectionate warning before the act of severance takes place. The increase of wealth has proved a snare to many a Christian professor, who loved his brethren, and the weekly meeting of his class, in the time of comparative poverty, but lost his attachment to both when wealth flowed in upon him. The Methodist societies are therefore taught in their weekly class-meeting to sing,—

“Never let the world break in;

Fix a mighty gulf between.”

While the faithful men of whom we are now speaking were careful to keep the societies pure, as a means of their prosperity, they were no less faithful in watching over one another in love. No sin among them was ever tolerated. The character of every one of them underwent a strict scrutiny every year; and any deviation from rule, and from moral purity, was visited with solemn admonition, reproof,

or expulsion, as the case might be. Every preacher was his brother's keeper.

Yet their perfect oneness of mind and heart was not the least remarkable element of their character. They were pledged to teach the same doctrine ; to observe and enforce the same system of discipline ; to aim at the same object, the advancement of true spiritual religion to the widest possible extent ; and in the year 1752 thirteen of them, including the two Wesleys, affixed their names to the following agreement :—"That we will not listen, or willingly inquire after any ill concerning each other : That if we do hear any ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it : That, as soon as possible, we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing, to the person concerned : That till we have done this we will not write a syllable or speak of it to any other person whatsoever : That neither will we mention it after we have done this to any other person : That we will not make any exception to any of these rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in conscience so to do."

Cordial as was their affection for one another, which was perpetuated and increased by their annual Conference, when they renewed their mutual greetings, and strengthened their union by prayer, and the free discussion of questions affecting themselves and their work ; yet in the year 1753 they proposed the question, "What can be done in order to a closer union of our helpers with each other ?" and agreed to the following results :—"Let them be deeply con-

vinced of the want there is of it at present, and the absolute necessity of it: Let them pray for an earnest desire of union: Let them speak freely to each other: When they meet, let them never part without prayer: Let them beware how they despise each other's gifts: Let them never speak slightly of each other in any kind: Let them defend one another's character, in everything, to the utmost of their power: And let them labour in honour each to prefer the other before himself."

At this period the preachers were few in number; their circuits were very extensive and wide apart; they had, therefore, little intercourse with each other, and seldom met, except at their annual Conference, when their salutations were eminently cordial and affectionate. What words can express the joyous and sanctified emotion with which they would unite in singing, at the dictation of Mr. Wesley, the following stanzas, as they stood around him in the Conference?—

"Our friendship sanctify and guide:
Unmix'd with selfishness and pride,
Thy glory be our single aim!
In all our intercourse below,
Still let us in Thy footsteps go,
And never meet but in Thy name.
Fix on Thyself our single eye;
Still let us on Thyself rely,
For all the help that each conveys;
The help as from Thy hand receive;
And still to Thee all glory give,
All thanks, all might, all love, all praise.

“Witnesses of the’ all-cleansing blood,
Long may we work the works of God,
And do Thy will like those above :
Together spread the Gospel sound,
And scatter peace on all around,
And joy, and happiness, and love.
True yoke-fellows, by love compell’d
To labour in the Gospel field,
Our all let us delight to spend
In gathering in Thy lambs and sheep ;
Assured that Thou our souls wilt keep,
Wilt keep us faithful to the end.”

While they paid a most respectful deference to the counsels and judgment of Mr. Wesley, there was one subject on which they must have felt it extremely difficult to comply with his will ; and, indeed, it is matter of historic record, that in one or two instances they did contravene his express directions. They had the ministry of the Gospel, society-meetings, and lovefeasts, among themselves ; and they longed to have the Lord’s supper in their own places of worship, and in immediate connexion with their own people : but on no account would their venerable father in the Lord yield to their wishes in this respect, still cherishing the notion that the Christian ministry possesses a *priestly* character, with which he thought his preachers were not invested. His advice was, that the preachers and the members of the societies should resort to the parish-churches to receive the memorials of redeeming mercy. But many of the officiating clergy were their bitter enemies. John Nelson was

an able and skilful workman, and earned liberal wages as a stone-mason. Yet the vicar of Birstal reported him to the magistrates as a person who had no visible means of getting his living, and was therefore a proper man to be sent into the army, as if he had been a rogue and a vagabond. A clergyman in the north of England instituted a suit in the Spiritual Court at Durham against Christopher Hopper, for the double crime of keeping a school without a licence, and of calling sinners to repentance. The Rev. Henry Wickham, one of His Majesty's justices of the peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, committed Jonathan Reeves to York castle, his only crime being that of preaching Christ to the people. Dr. Borlase, a clerical magistrate in Cornwall, committed Thomas Westell to prison at Bodmin, and sent Thomas Maxfield into the army, on the same account. When Thomas Mitchell was holding a religious meeting, at the early hour of five o'clock on a Sunday morning, the clergyman of Wrangle raised a mob, who threw him repeatedly into a deep pond, till he was insensible, and then covered his clothes with paint. They afterwards dragged him out of bed, and conducted him half naked out of the town, and there left him, either to perish, or find his way to a people who were less inhuman than the Wrangle pastor and his servile flock. Now suppose these preachers to have gone to receive the Lord's supper at the hands of these reverend gentlemen, by whom they had been so deeply injured; what appropriate fellowship,

the fellowship of holy love, could there be between the parties? The sight of each other must have been anything but attractive and pleasurable. They could hardly regard themselves as one with each other, as Christ is one with the Father. Yet such ought to be the feeling of Christ's disciples and friends when they surround His table, and partake of the holy supper which He has instituted as a symbol of their union. In cases of this kind, Mr. Wesley confesses that he often acted with a doubting conscience. He was environed with difficulties; but he saw that such a state of things could not be maintained in perpetuity, and therefore, towards the close of life, he ordained several of his preachers to administer the sacraments, as well as to preach the Gospel. He evidently felt that this arrangement could not be much longer delayed.

The psalmist called upon the people of his time to "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright," adding, "For the end of that man is peace;" and such was "the end" of the faithful men of whom we are now speaking. They died in faith, professing, with their latest breath, a sure trust and confidence in Christ, whose Gospel they had preached, to whom their lives were devoted, and to whom they had invited lost sinners, as the only Saviour from the wrath to come. Brief obituaries of them were drawn up by Mr. Wesley, who knew their worth, seldom extending to more than two or three expressive sentences; for he knew that their record is on high, and that a great reward awaits them at the resurrec-

tion of the just. Few tablets have been erected to their memory, and in many cases the exact place of their interment is unknown. But they need no marble monuments. The more than five thousand Methodist chapels in Great Britain alone; the still greater number of societies; the improved morals of England; the Methodist missions in the four quarters of the globe; the Methodist churches in America; the numerous and active offshoots of Methodism at home and abroad;—these constitute a more honourable monument than human hands ever erected; and these are the results of their ministry.

By the labours of the early Methodist preachers the clergy of the national church have been moved to emulation, and the country enjoys the benefit of their awakened energy. By the same means many Dissenting churches have been replenished, and supplied with efficient pastors. And shall not the memory of these men, then, be cherished by a grateful posterity? The truth is, all classes of the community owe a debt of gratitude to the early Methodist preachers, were it only for the respect which is now generally paid to religion, and to religious people. John Goodwin, John Milton, and John Locke taught the true theory of religious liberty, as the most sacred right of human nature. The Methodist preachers reduced the theory to practice, asserting it with unflinching fidelity; and by steady perseverance they succeeded in putting down all public and avowed opposition from country

squires, clerical magistrates, and lawless mobs. England is great, because she is free,—religiously, commercially, and politically free; and among her emancipators John Wesley's "helpers" are entitled to an honourable rank. They were loyal and patriotic. Did they ever quail before the intolerant spirits of their day? "No, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel," and freedom of religious worship, might remain with the labouring poor as their best and dearest birthright.

Methodist congregations owe a debt of gratitude to those brave and godly men. They now assemble in commodious places of worship, where they hear the Gospel in its purity, unmixed with Popery, scepticism, and heathen fate. They can pass from their homes to the house of God without disturbance, and worship without fear, which their fathers could not do; and this privilege has been secured to them by the John Nelsons of the last century.

Methodist preachers of the present time, whether old or young, are bound to think of their fathers in the Gospel with more than ordinary reverence, thankfulness, and esteem. Many, doubtless, are the inconveniences connected with an itinerant ministry; but what are they when compared with the inconveniences which were encountered by John Nelson and his brave contemporaries, who had societies, chapels, stewards, and all the appliances of Methodism, to create? When they entered upon their work, no provision was made for them, their wives, or their children; and much less for them in the time of

sickness, or of old age. Well may it be said to their successors, "Other men have laboured" and suffered; "and ye have entered into their labours," and enjoy the benefit of their toils and privations.

The truest respect that the present race of Methodist preachers can show for their venerable fathers who now sleep in Jesus, is to imitate them in their zeal for the honour of Christ, and the salvation of souls redeemed by His blood; in their inflexible adherence to the truth; their power in prayer; their plainness and earnest simplicity in preaching; their irresistible appeals to the consciences of their hearers; their self-denial; their pastoral visitation from house to house; their sympathy with the poor and the afflicted; their mighty faith in God; their affectionate concern for the young; their enterprise in carrying the Gospel into neglected districts; their fidelity in maintaining every part of the Methodist discipline; their undying attachment and fidelity to each other; their intense earnestness in their attempts to alarm the unconverted, to bring penitent sinners into Christian liberty, and to bring all believers to the possession of the perfect love which casteth out fear. In their times a hum of sympathy with the preacher was usually heard in every regular congregation when he was engaged in prayer, and a hearty Amen followed every petition; for the power of the Lord was present to save, and was felt by the worshippers. God forbid that the time should ever come when an effective and converting ministry, lively prayer-meetings, lively class-meetings, lively

lovefeasts, and lively sacraments, should ever be spoken of and regarded only as things that are past !

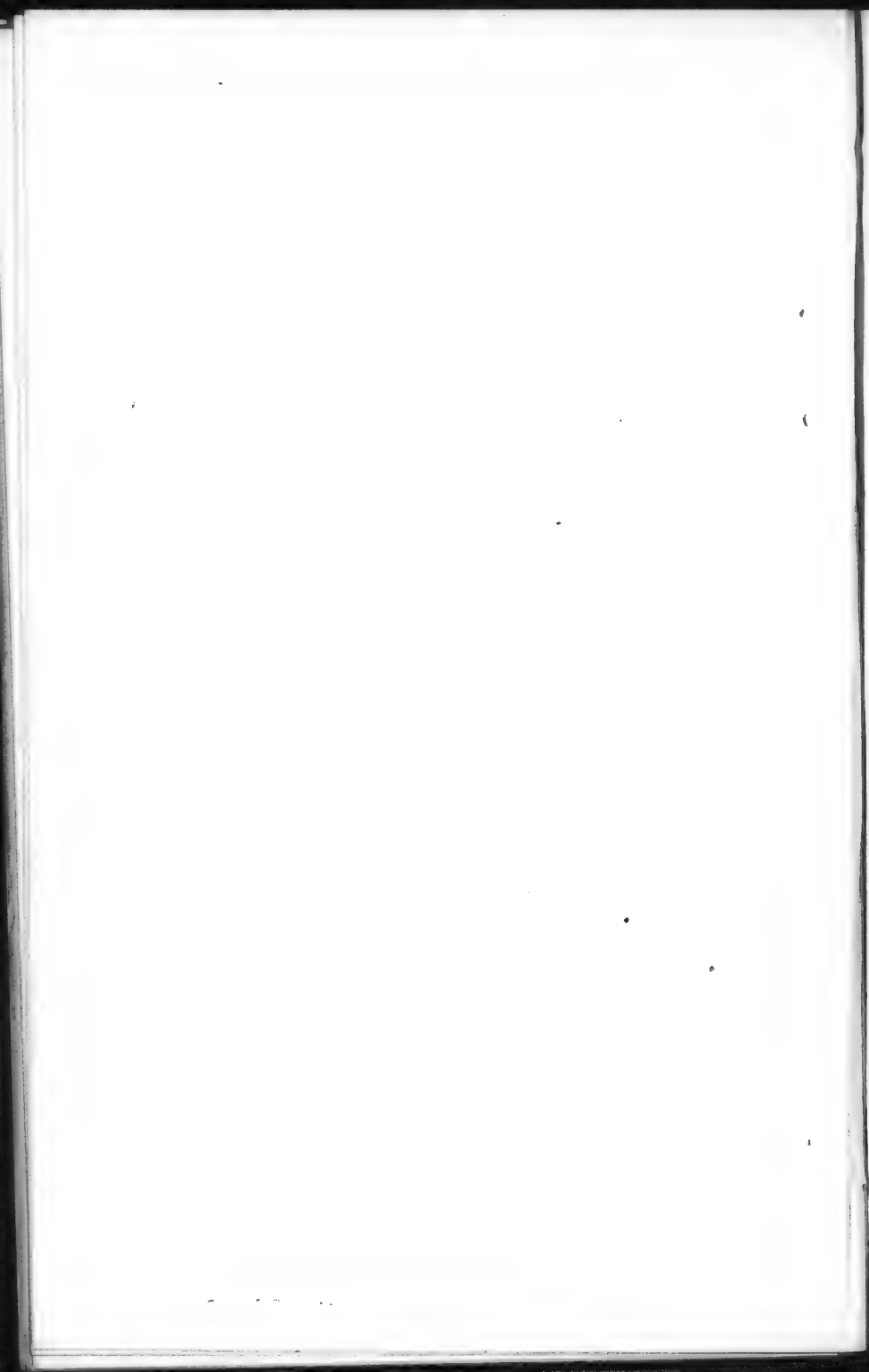
Mr. Wesley executed the Deed of Declaration, giving a character and constitution to the Conference, "for the whole body of Methodists; in order to fix them upon such a foundation as is likely to stand as long as the sun and moon endure. That is," says he, "if they continue to walk by faith, and show forth their faith by their works: otherwise I pray God to root out the memorial of them from the earth."

LONDON, *October 9th*, 1865.

THE LIVES

OF

EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.



AN EXTRACT
OF
JOHN NELSON'S JOURNAL;

BEING

AN ACCOUNT OF GOD'S DEALING WITH HIS SOUL FROM HIS
YOUTH TO THE FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF HIS AGE,
AND HIS WORKING BY HIM:

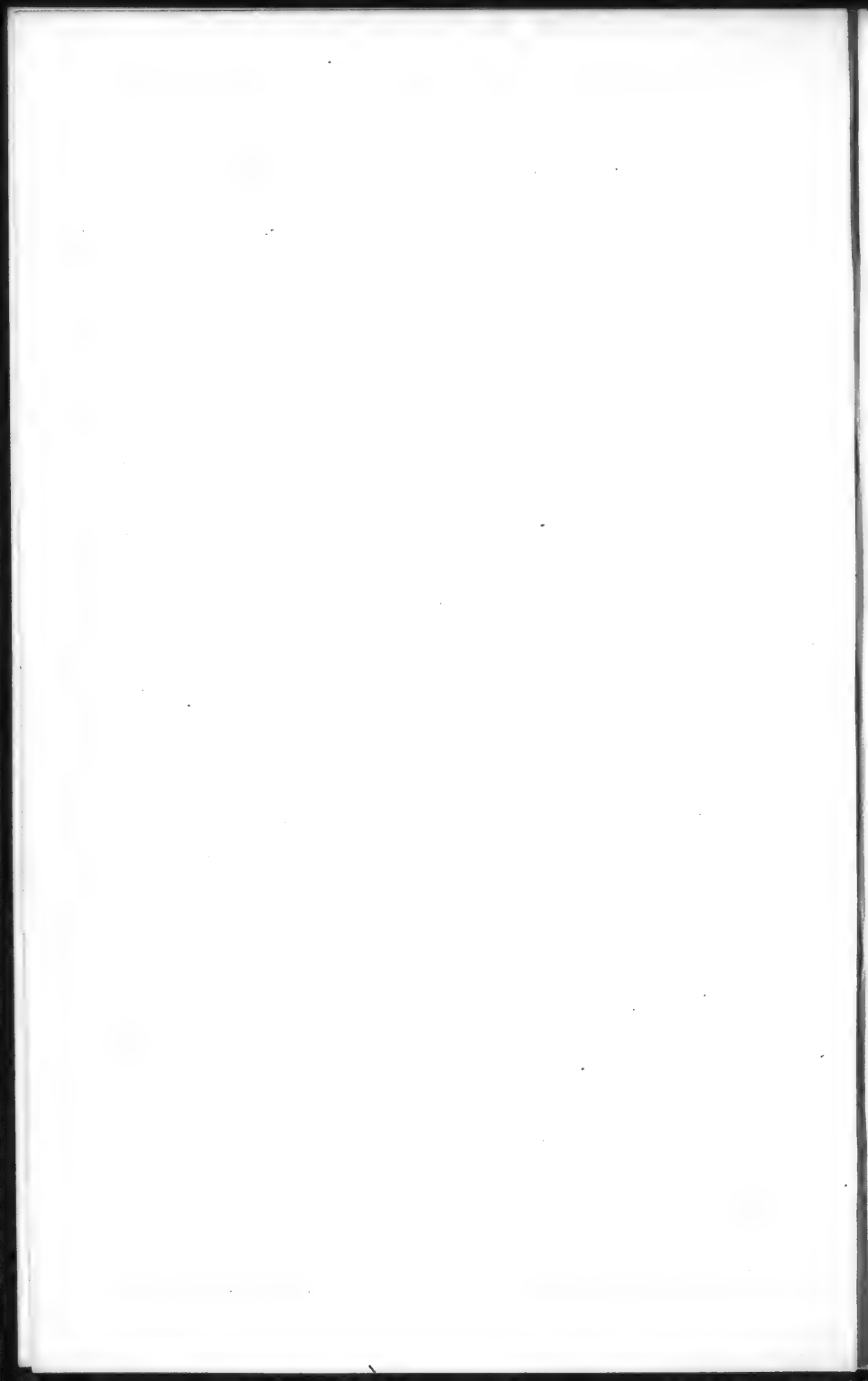
LIKEWISE THE OPPRESSIONS HE MET WITH FROM PEOPLE OF
DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

"Lord, Thou hast led the blind by a way that he knew not."

"Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeem'd from death and sin,
A brand pluck'd from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
And sing my great Deliverer's praise?"



THE PREFACE.

THE following sheets were written at divers times, for my own satisfaction. But about seventeen years ago, when I was in the Newcastle Round, I transcribed them into a book. Some of our friends saw them, and begged they might be printed; which I refused at that time, knowing my own ignorance and inability.

However, Mr. Thornton the lawyer heard of it, and desired me to let him see it; when he thought, as "the Case" had been already published, and had been a means of stirring up many to hear the word, this might be of use to comfort some that were in trouble, and advised me to put it to the press.

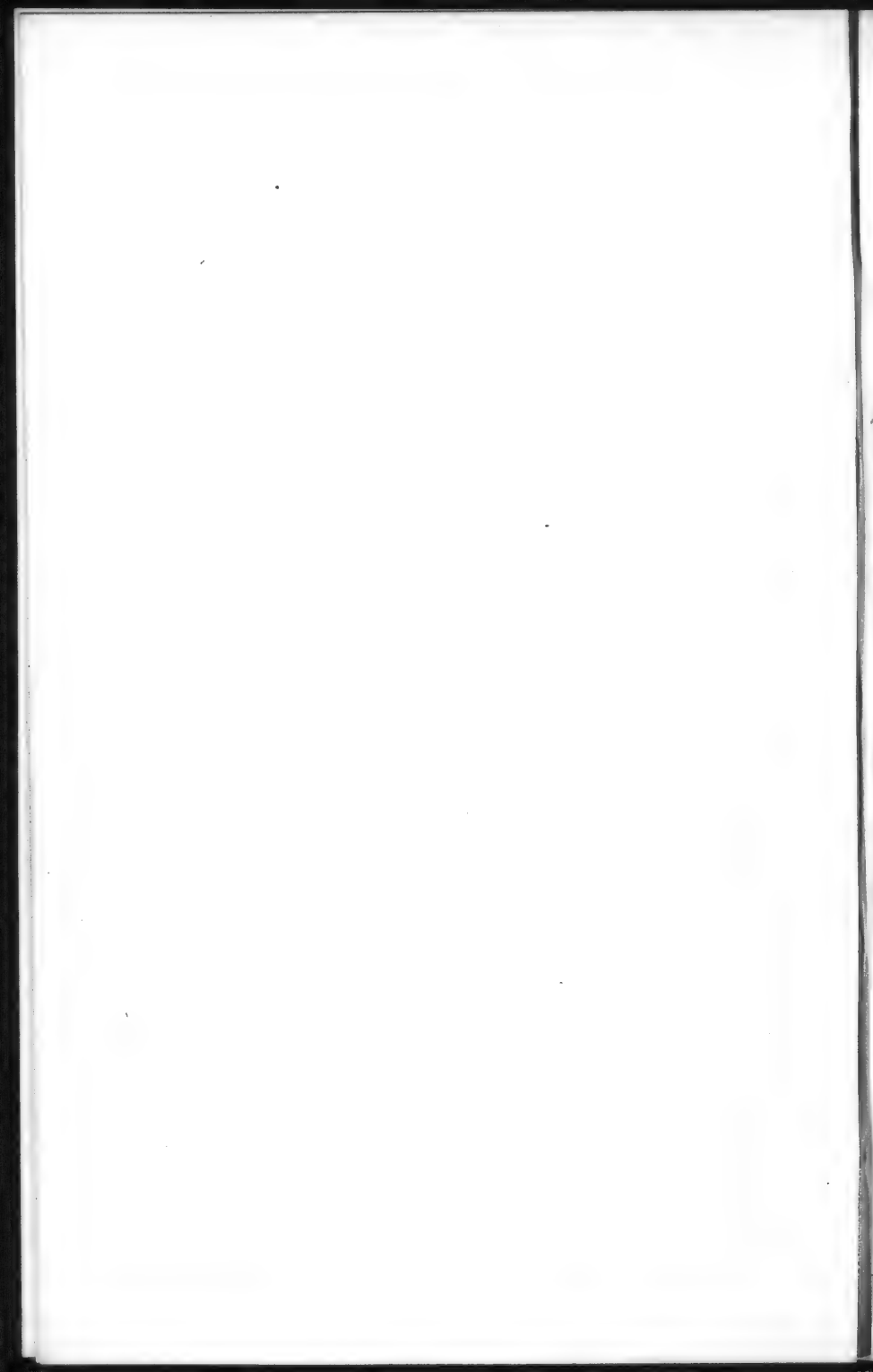
I declined it for the present; but Mr. Thornton showed them to several friends at Leeds, who were of the same opinion, and pressed upon me to print it immediately, which I with much reluctance agreed to: and I pray that God may make it a blessing to all that read it; and if any receive benefit therefrom, the Lord shall have the glory; for to Him alone it doth belong.

What is wrong may the Lord pardon! and that no one may be hurt by me, or anything I have written or preached, is the sincere prayer of their unworthy servant,

For Christ's sake,

JOHN NELSON.

[*Birstal*, 1767.]



THE JOURNAL

OF

MR. JOHN NELSON.

I, JOHN NELSON, was born in the parish of Birstal, in the West Riding of the county of York, in October, 1707, and brought up a mason, as was my father before me.

When I was between nine and ten years old, I was horribly terrified with the thoughts of death and judgment, whenever I was alone. One Sunday night, as I sat on the ground by the side of my father's chair, when he was reading the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, the word came with such light and power to my soul, that it made me tremble, as if a dart were shot at my heart. I fell with my face on the floor, and wept till the place was as wet, where I lay, as if water had been poured thereon. As my father proceeded, I thought I saw everything he read about, though my eyes were shut; and the sight was so terrible, I was about to stop my ears, that I might not hear, but I durst not: as soon as I put my fingers in my ears, I pulled them back again. When he came to the eleventh verse, the words made me cringe, and my flesh seemed to creep on my bones while he read, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat thereon, from whose face

the heavens and the earth fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works." O, what a scene was opened to my mind ! It was as if I had seen the Lord Jesus Christ sitting on His throne, with the twelve Apostles below Him, and a large book open at His left hand ; and, as it were, a bar fixed about ten paces from the throne, to which the children of Adam came up ; and every one, as he approached, opened his breast, as quick as a man could open the bosom of his shirt. On one leaf of the book was written the character of the children of God ; and on the other, the character of those that should not enter into the kingdom of heaven. I thought neither the Lord nor the Apostles said anything ; but every soul, as he came up to the bar, compared his conscience with the book, and went away to his own place, either singing or else crying and howling. Those that went to the right hand were but like the stream of a small brook, but the others were like the flowing of a mighty river.

God had followed me with convictions ever since I was ten years old ; and whenever I had committed any known sin, either against God or man, I used to be so terrified afterwards that I shed many tears in private : yet, when I came to my companions, I wiped my face, and went on again in sin and folly. But, O ! the hell I found in my mind when I came to be alone again ; and what resolutions I made ! Nevertheless, when temptations came, my resolutions were as a thread of tow that had touched the fire.

When I was about sixteen, I heard a sermon in our own church, which deprived me of rest in the night; nor durst I sin as I had done before for many days. But, alas! I looked the wrong way; for I watched those that were older and more learned than myself; and what they did, I thought I might safely do: so I turned back to sin and folly. O, what evil do the old and learned do to those who are young and unlearned! When their lives are corrupt, they are certainly the most accursed beings on the earth. How many times has their example hardened my heart, and encouraged me in the broad way! Surely they are a curse to their own children and servants, as well as to their ignorant and unlearned neighbours.

When I was turned a little of sixteen, my father was taken ill, which I thought was for my wickedness: yet at that time, vile as I was, I prayed earnestly that God would spare him for the sake of my mother and the young children, and let me die in his stead; but the Lord would not regard my prayer. Three days before he died, he said to my mother, "Trouble not thyself for me; for I know that my peace is made with God, and He will provide for thee and the children." I was greatly surprised at his words, wondering how he could know his peace was made with God.

In one of my times of trouble I was in a stable, and, falling into a slumber, I dreamed I prayed that God would make me happy. But I thought, "What will make me happy?" I also dreamed that I beheld Jeremiah the Prophet standing on a large rock, at the west gate of Jerusalem. His countenance was grave, and with great authority he reproved the elders and magistrates of the city; for which they

were enraged, and, pulling him down, cast him on a dunghill where the butchers poured forth the blood of their slain beasts : and I imagined I saw them tread him under their feet ; but his countenance never changed, neither did he cease to cry out, " Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not repent and give glory to My name, I will bring destruction on you and your city." He seemed so composed and so happy while he lay on the dunghill, and while they were treading him under their feet, that I said in my dream, " O God ! make me like Jeremiah !" and, though it was but a dream, it left as great an impression on me as if I had seen it with my eyes. And since then Thou, Lord, hast, in a small measure, given me to taste of his cup.

When I was about nineteen, I found myself in great danger of falling into scandalous sins ; and I prayed, I believe, twenty times that God would preserve me, and give me a wife, that I might live with her to His glory. He heard my prayer, and delivered me out of many dangerous temptations ; for which I praise His holy name.

The first time I ever saw my wife was at Tonge, where I was going to build the new church. I did not know who she was, nor where she came from ; but, at first sight, I said in my mind, " That is the woman I asked of God in prayer ;" and I fully determined, if I got married, I would live to His glory. But what are resolutions when made in our own strength ! For, though I believe God gave me the most suitable wife that I could have had, in every respect, yet, for some years after we were married, I did not live to His glory, for I loved pleasure more than God : yet many times when I had been shooting a whole day, and had got the creatures

I pursued, I was quite unhappy, and ready to break my gun in pieces, resolving never to shoot or hunt any more. At last I said to my wife, "I am determined to leave off this course of life; yet it is impossible, if I stay here: therefore, if thou art free, I will go to Sir Rowland Wynn's, and see if I can get business there; if not, I will go somewhere else, at a distance from home." To this she gladly consented.

On Monday morning, we parted in great love, praying one for the other. As I went from our town, I made use of Jacob's words, which he spake to the Lord as he went to Padan-aram; and the Lord blessed me in all my journey. I found work at Newark-on-Trent, and stayed about a month. All that time the hand of God was upon me, by convicting me of my former sins; so that the sense of His wrath being justly kindled against me, made me cry to Him for mercy, often forty times in the day. Then I went to London, and got into business the day I arrived there. Here my concern for salvation increased for some time, and I continued to read and pray when I had done my work, refusing all company; and I believe, if I had had some one to show me the way, I should have closed in with the Lord in a saving manner. But I looked at men for example, and fell from my seriousness. The workmen cursed and abused me, because I would not drink with them, and spend my money as they did. I bore many insults from them, without opening my mouth to speak to them again. But when they took my tools from me, and said, if I did not drink with them, I should not work while they were drinking, that provoked me, so that I fought with several of them: then they let me alone. But that stifled my

concern for salvation, and I left off prayer and reading in a great measure. I stayed better than half a year, and had not one hour's sickness, nor did I want one day's work all that time; so that by my hand-labour I cleared, besides maintaining myself, twelve pounds fifteen shillings.

When I came home, I fell into my former course. I said to my wife, "I cannot live here." So I set off for London again, ordering her to follow me in the wagon. We both got well there, and lived in a good way, as the world calls it; that is, in peace and plenty, and love to each other.

After some time, I had a sore fit of illness: then my conscience was alarmed, and I expected to die, and perish body and soul in hell. O the distress I was in! not through fear of death, so much as of the judgment that should follow. But the Lord rebuked the fever, and restored me to perfect health.

After residing some years in London, my wife had not her health: therefore we agreed that she should take our two children and go into the country, and I would follow at a certain season; which accordingly I did. But I could not rest night or day. I said, "I must go to London again." Several asked me, "Why I would go again, since I might live at home as well as anywhere in the world?" My answer was, "I have something to learn that I have not yet learned;" but I did not know that it was the great lesson of love to God and man. When I got there, I fell to work presently, and all things prospered that I pursued. I then began to consider what I wanted to make me happy; for I was yet as a man in a barren wilderness, that could find no way out. I said to myself, "What can I desire that I have not? I enjoy as good health as any man can do; I have

as agreeable a wife as I can wish for ; I am clothed as well as I can desire ; I have, at present, more gold and silver than I have need of ; yet still I keep wandering from one part of the kingdom to another, seeking rest, and cannot find it." Then I cried out, " O that I had been a cow, or a sheep !" for I looked back to see how I had spent above thirty years ; and thought, rather than live thirty years more so, I would choose strangling. But when I considered that, after such a troublesome life, I must give an account before God of the deeds done in the body, who knew all my thoughts, words, and actions, I cried out, " O that I had never been born !" for I feared my day of grace was over, because I had made so many resolutions and broken them all. Yet I thought I would set out once more ; for I said, " Surely, God never made man to be such a riddle to himself, and to leave him so : there must be something in religion, that I am unacquainted with, to satisfy the empty mind of man ; or he is in a worse state than the beasts that perish." In all these troubles I had none to open my mind to ; so I wandered up and down in the fields, when I had done my work, meditating what course to take to save my soul.

I went from church to church, but found no ease. One minister at St. Paul's preached about man doing his duty to God and his neighbour, and when such came to lie upon a death-bed, what joy they would find in their own breast by looking back on their well-spent life. But that sermon had like to have destroyed my soul ; for I looked back, and could not see one day in all my life wherein I had not left undone something which I ought to have done, and wherein I had not done many things wrong : and I

was so far from having a well-spent life to reflect upon, that I saw, if one day well-spent would save my soul, I must be damned for ever. O, what a stab was that sermon to my wounded soul ! It made me wish my mother's womb had been my grave. After that, I heard another sermon, wherein the preacher summed up all the Christian duties ; but he said, " Man, since the fall, could not perfectly fulfil the will of his Maker ; but God required him to do all he could, and Christ would make out the rest : but if man did not do all he could, he must unavoidably perish ; for he had no right to expect any interest in the merits of Christ, if he had not fulfilled his part, and done all that lay in his power." Then I thought, " Not only I, but every soul must be damned ;" for I did not believe that any who had lived to years of maturity had done all they could, and avoided all the evil they might. Therefore, I concluded that none could be saved but little children. O, what deadly physic was that sort of doctrine to my poor sin-sick soul !

I thought I would try others, and went to hear Dissenters of divers denominations ; but to no purpose. I went to the Roman Catholics, but was soon surfeited with their way of worship. Then I went to the Quakers, and prayed that God would not suffer the blind to go out of the way, but join me to the people that worshipped Him in spirit and in truth ; I cared not what they were called, nor what I suffered upon earth, so that my soul might be saved at last. I believe I heard them every Sunday for three months : what made me continue so long was, the expectation of some help by hearing them ; for there was one, almost at my first going, that spoke something that nearly suited the state my soul was

in ; but he showed no remedy. I had now tried all but the Jews, and I thought it was to no purpose to go to them ; so I thought I would go to church, and read and pray, whether I perish or not. But I was amazed, when I came to join in the Morning Prayer, to see that I had mocked my Maker all my days, by praying for things I did not expect or desire : then I thought none could be so ignorant as I had been, nor so base, to draw near to God with their lips while their hearts were so far from Him.

In the spring Mr. Whitefield came into Moorfields, and I went to hear him. He was to me as a man who could play well on an instrument ; for his preaching was pleasant to me, and I loved the man ; so that if any one offered to disturb him, I was ready to fight for him. But I did not understand him, though I might hear him twenty times for aught I know. Yet I got some hope of mercy, so that I was encouraged to pray on, and spend my leisure hours in reading the Scriptures. Sometimes, as I was reading, I thought, "If what I read is true, and if none are Christians but such as St. John and St. Paul describe to be God's people, I do not know any person that is a Christian either in town or country." I said, "If things be so, I am no more a Christian than the devil ;" and my hope of ever being one was very small. In this struggle I had but little sleep : if I slept four hours out of twenty-four, I thought it a great deal. Sometimes I started, as if I was falling into some horrible place. At other times I dreamed that I was fighting with Satan ; and when I awoke I was sweating, and as fatigued as if I had really been fighting. Yet all this time I was as capable of working, both in understanding and strength, as ever I was in my life ; and this was an

encouragement to me. In all this time I did not open my mind to any person, either by word or letter; but I was like a wandering bird, cast out of the nest, till Mr. John Wesley came to preach his first sermon in Moorfields. O, that was a blessed morning to my soul! As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair, and turned his face towards where I stood, and I thought fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and, when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me. When he had done, I said, "This man can tell the secrets of my heart: he hath not left me there; for he hath showed the remedy, even the blood of Jesus." Then was my soul filled with consolation, through hope that God for Christ's sake would save me; neither did I doubt in such a manner any more, till within twenty-four hours of the time when the Lord wrote a pardon on my heart. Though it was a little after Midsummer that I heard him, and it was three weeks after Michaelmas before I found the true peace of God, yet I continued to hear as often as I could, without neglecting my work. I had many flashes of love under the word, when I was at private prayer, and at the table of the Lord; but they were short, and often some sore temptations followed.

Now all my acquaintance set upon me, to persuade me not to go too far in religion, lest it should unfit me for my business, and so bring poverty and distress on my family: they said, "We wish you had never heard Mr. Wesley, for we are afraid it will be the ruin of you." I told them, "I had reason to bless God that ever he was born, for by hearing him

I was made sensible that my business in this world is to get well out of it; and as for my trade, health, wisdom, and all things in this world, they are no blessings to me, any farther than as so many instruments to help me, by the grace of God, to work out my salvation." Then they said they were very sorry for me, and should be glad to knock Mr. Wesley's brains out; for he would be the ruin of many families, if he were allowed to live, and go on as he did. Some of them said they would not hear him preach for fifty pounds. But I told them I had reason to bless God that ever I heard him, and I intended to hear him as often as I could, for I believed him to be God's messenger; and if I did not seek to be born again, and experience a spiritual birth, I could not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which was the doctrine he preached.

A little after Michaelmas, I had many trials again, and passion got advantage over me: then I thought it was to no purpose for me to strive any longer; for every one endeavoured to provoke me, and I could not bear it. About this time, I was going out of the Park into Westminster, where was a soldier with his arms about him, as he was coming from guard, who began to talk to some other soldiers and a company of Welsh women. I was but a few paces from him: the tenor of his discourse was as follows:—"You know what manner of man I was some months ago, and none of you pitied me then, though I was going headlong to the devil; for I was a drunkard and a swearer, I was a whoremonger and a fighter, a Sabbath-breaker and a gamester; nay, I know no sin but I was guilty of it, either in word or deed; so that it is a miracle that my neck was not brought to the gallows, and my soul sent to hell long ago. At

that time I durst not think of death; for I had no reason to think of aught but hell. I was therefore desperate in wickedness, and did not put a restraint on any lust or appetite; till one day, as I was coming out of the country by Kennington Common, Mr. John Wesley was going to preach, and I thought I would hear what he had to say; for I had heard many learned and wise men say, he was beside himself. But when he began to speak, his words made me tremble. I thought he spoke to no one but me, and I durst not look up; for I imagined all the people were looking at me. I was ashamed to show my face, expecting God would make me a public example, either by letting the earth open and swallow me up, or by striking me dead. But before Mr. Wesley concluded his sermon, he cried out, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' I said, 'If that be true, I will turn to God to-day.' I immediately went home, and began to read and pray, keeping out of bad company for about a fortnight, and hearing Mr. Wesley as often as I could. But my old companions missed me, and came to see what was the matter. When they found me reading the Bible, they cursed and swore, and dragged me away to an ale-house, where I sat down, and began to reason with them. But, O, how dangerous is it to encounter Satan on his own ground! for, as I talked, I began to drink a little, and the liquor getting into my head, I quarrelled with them and fought; and as I was going to my quarters, a lewd woman met me, and I had no power to resist her, and was again taken captive by the devil. Nevertheless, when I had slept, I was so

terrified, I thought I never durst pray any more, or expect mercy. I was determined, however, to hear Mr. Charles Wesley that night ; and by his preaching, I had some hopes that my day of grace was not over. Then I began to pray again, and read the Scriptures ; and one Sunday morning I called at Whitehall Chapel, where the sacrament was going to be delivered. I went to the table with trembling limbs and a heavy heart ; but no sooner had I received, than I found power to believe that Jesus Christ had shed His blood for me, and that God, for His sake, had forgiven my offences. Then was my heart filled with love to God and man ; and since then sin hath not had dominion over me."

These sayings of the soldier were a blessing to me ; for they sank deep into my mind, and made me cry more earnestly that God would work the same change in my heart. I found my soul much refreshed at the sacrament on the Sunday after, and mightily encouraged under Mr. Wesley's sermon in the afternoon. All the week after I felt an awful sense of God resting upon me ; and I had a great watchfulness over my words, and several short visits of love, having great hope that I had got complete victory over my besetting sin. But passion was yet too strong for me ; for that night I fell again, and cried out immediately, "I am undone ; I have lost all hopes of mercy." All the night I was as if I had been given up to Satan. In the morning, one prayed with me, but I found no answer ; for my heart was as hard as a rock.

When I went back to my lodging at noon, dinner was ready ; and the gentlewoman said, "Come, sit down : you have need of your dinner, for you have eaten nothing to-day." But when I looked on the

meat, I said, "Shall such a wretch as I devour the good creatures of God in the state I am now in? No; I deserve to be thrust into hell." I then went into my chamber, shut the door, and fell down on my knees, crying, "Lord, save, or I perish!" When I had prayed till I could pray no more, I got up and walked to and fro, being resolved I would neither eat nor drink till I had found the kingdom of God. I fell down to prayer again, but found no relief; got up and walked again: then tears began to flow from my eyes, like great drops of rain, and I fell on my knees a third time; but now I was as dumb as a beast, and could not put up one petition, if it would have saved my soul. I kneeled before the Lord some time, and saw myself a criminal before the Judge: then I said, "Lord, thy will be done; damn or save!" That moment Jesus Christ was as evidently set before the eye of my mind, as crucified for my sins; as if I had seen Him with my bodily eyes; and in that instant my heart was set at liberty from guilt and tormenting fear, and filled with a calm and serene peace. I could then say, without any dread or fear, "Thou art my Lord and my God." Now did I begin to sing that part of the 12th chapter of Isaiah, "O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." My heart was filled with love to God and every soul of man: next to my wife and children, my mother, brethren, and sisters, my greatest enemies had an interest in my prayers; and I cried, "O Lord, give me to see my desire on them: let them experience Thy redeeming love!"

In the afternoon I opened the book where it is said, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," &c. ; with which I was so affected, that I could not read for weeping. That evening, under Mr. Wesley's sermon, I could do nothing but weep, and love, and praise God, for sending His servant into the fields to show me the way of salvation. All that day I neither ate nor drank anything: for before I found peace, the hand of God was so heavy upon me, that I refused to eat; and after I had found peace, I was so filled with the manna of redeeming love, that I had no need of the bread that perisheth for that season.

At night, when I came home, the gentlewoman of the house where I had lodged a long time, told me to provide a lodging; for I must stay there no longer than that one night, since her husband was afraid some mischief would come either on them or me, with so much praying and fuss as I had made about religion. I told them I would come on Wednesday night, and pay what I owed them, and fetch my clothes away, praying that God might reward them for the kindness they had showed me: for I had had a fever in the house; and no one could show more compassion to a stranger than they did to me at that time.

On Wednesday night, according to my promise, I went to my old lodging, and paid what I owed, and got my clothes ready to bring away. But having forgotten something, I stepped back into the room to look for it. In the mean time, the man said to his wife, "Suppose John should be right, and we wrong, it will be a sad thing to turn him out of doors." When I came down, the woman stood at the door, and said, "You shall not go out of this

house to-night." I said, "What, will you neither let me go nor stay?" She replied, "My husband is not willing you should go: for he saith, if God has done anything more for you than for us, he would have you show us how we may find the same mercy." So I sat down with them, and told them of God's dealings with my soul, and prayed with them. Soon after, they both went to hear Mr. Wesley, when the woman was made a partaker of the same grace; and I hope to meet them both in heaven.

On the Saturday following, the dragon stood ready to devour my new-born soul; for my master's chief foreman came to me, saying, "John Nelson, you must look after such and such men to-morrow: there is a piece of work to be done with all speed; for the Lords of the Exchequer will be here on a particular day, by which time it must be completed." "Sir," I replied, "you have forgotten yourself: to-morrow is the Sabbath." He said he knew that as well as I; but the King's business required haste, and it was common to work on the Sunday for His Majesty, when anything was upon the finish. I told him I would not work upon the Sabbath for any man in England, except it was to quench fire, or something that required the same immediate help. He said, "Religion has made you a rebel against the King." I answered, "No, sir; it has made me a better subject than ever I was." I added, "The greatest enemies the King has are the Sabbath-breakers, swearers, drunkards, and whoremongers; for these pull down God's judgments upon both King and country." Then he said, if I would not obey him, I should lose my business. I replied, "I cannot help it: though it may be ten pounds out of my way to be turned out of my work at this time of the year, I

will not wilfully offend God ; for I had much rather want bread ; nay, I would rather see my wife and children beg their bread bare-footed to heaven, than ride in a coach to hell." He swore, if I went on awhile, I should be as mad as Whitefield ; and added, "What hast thou done, that thou needest make so much ado about salvation ? I always took thee to be as honest a man as any I have in the work, and could have trusted thee with five hundred pounds." I answered, "So you might, and not have lost one penny by me." He said, "What, hast thou killed somebody, or committed adultery, that thou art so much afraid of being damned ?" I replied, "God takes the will for the deed ; and though clear from those acts, I deserve to be damned tenfold for other crimes ; for if I sin wilfully against God, after He hath showed me such mercy, I may expect to have the hottest hell." He said, "I have a worse opinion of thee now than ever." I replied, "Master, I have the odds of you ; for I have a much worse opinion of myself, than you can have."

At night, when I went to receive my wages, he asked me if I were still obstinate. I answered, "I am determined not to break the Sabbath ; for I will run the hazard of wanting bread here, before I would run the hazard of wanting water hereafter." He said, "Wesley has made a fool of thee, and thou wilt beggar thy family." I had a glorious Sabbath the next day ; for God blessed my soul wonderfully, both under the word, and at the sacrament.

I went on Monday morning to the Exchequer, to take care of my tools, not expecting to work there any more. But God hath the hearts of all men in His own hand ; for he that was so wroth with me on the Saturday, now gave me good words, and bade

me set the men to work. From that time he carved better for me than before; neither did he set any man to work on the Sabbath, as he had said he would. So I see it is good to obey God, and cast our care upon Him, who will order all things well; for if we refuse to join the wicked, it will be a restraint to them.

In the time of my convictions, I never let my wife know of my trouble; but now I could not eat my morsel alone. I therefore wrote to her and all my relations, to seek the same mercy that I had found. However, all I said seemed as idle tales to most of them.

Some weeks after, three gentlemen (professed Deists) fell upon me, and reasoned with me for about an hour; but the Lord put such words in my mouth, that made them say, Mr. Wesley had taught me his own lesson, and I was sunk so deep into enthusiasm that I was past recovery. Nevertheless, I see it is bad for weak believers to reason with men of corrupt principles; for after some time the enemy brought their words to my mind, and began to reason with me in this manner: "Suppose Jesus Christ should be an impostor, (as these men say he is,) thou art lost for ever." O! the distress I was in for a short time. But I made a stop, and said, "If Jesus Christ be not the Son of God, and my Saviour, I will be damned; for I will have no other." Then the cloud broke, and my soul was so filled with love, that I thought, if all the world, yea, and the devils in hell, were to set on me, they could not make me disbelieve that Jesus Christ is the very and true God, and my Redeemer.

I daily reproved all that sinned in the work where I was; so that none of them would swear in

my presence. But having no Christian friend to converse with, I kept close to God in prayer, and read the Bible at all opportunities, and heard one of the Mr. Wesleys every Sunday, and stirred up many others to hear them. And though I had many trials, I was so kept by the power of God, that nothing disturbed my peace for some time.

Once, however, as I was reading in the Bible, a gentlewoman (that lived in part of the house) brought me a book, and said, "You are often reading the Bible: if you please, I will lend you this book. My mother," she added, "took delight in reading therein." I thanked her, and began to read. For some pages it was agreeable to many things I had experienced in the time of conviction; but it was not at all correspondent to my experience, as to my conversion: pleading for sin after conversion, to keep the saints humble, and making God the author of all sin.

Then the enemy began to reason with me, that I ought not to reprove sin any more. From that time, my love began to cool both unto God and man, and my zeal for the salvation of others abated; and though the more I read the worse I was, yet I was tempted to read it through.

Before I read in that book, I did not know there was a man in the world who held such an opinion; for, in my trials, I believed every threatening in the Bible was against the disobedient, and every promise to those that turn to God. But now I was tempted to think I was safe, do whatever I would. Yet I still prayed, "Lord, let me die, rather than live to sin against Thee!"

I had never spoken to Mr. Wesley in my life, nor conversed with an experienced man about religion.

I longed to find one to talk with ; but I sought in vain, for I could find none.

One time, as I was reasoning about what I had read, I opened the Bible on these words, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not." I then prayed, "O Lord, what I know not do Thou teach me!" And I thought I would wait upon the Lord in fasting and prayer till He revealed His will to me ; and I did, for several weeks, fast from Thursday night to eight o'clock on Saturday morning, spending the time I was off my work either upon my knees at prayer, or in searching the Scriptures ; and before I opened my Bible, I prayed that God would open my understanding to comprehend what I read. I think the first scripture that was applied to me was, "As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk in Him." Then I remembered what state my soul was in when I first received His Spirit in my heart ; that it was filled with love to every soul, and I could pray for all my enemies as well as myself ; but this book had turned me out of that blessed state, by setting me to reason about opinions that I never heard of in my life till several weeks after I had received the love of Christ : therefore I said in my mind, "Let it be right or wrong, it is not necessary for salvation. I found the Lord to be my Saviour before I knew there was a man in the world of that opinion ; and before I read it, I loved both God and man better than I have done since, and was more useful in reproving and doing good than I am now." I then prayed that God would give me that simplicity and godly sincerity that I walked in when He first revealed Christ in my heart. And He answered me in a wonderful manner ; so that my tongue was loosed to

reprove, and my heart again enlarged to pray for every soul of man.

I now went on my way rejoicing for some days, and had so much of the Lord all the day long, that my soul seemed to breathe its life in God as naturally as my body breathed life in the common air. But, one day, I reproved a man for swearing; when he told me he was predestined to it, and did not trouble himself about it at all: for if he were one of the elect, he should be saved; but if not, all he could do would not alter God's decree: so that all I said to him seemed to take no more hold on him than if I had thrown a leather ball against a rock. I thought God was very good to me, who kept me ignorant of these opinions till I knew my part in the all-atoning blood; for I feared if I had heard such things in the time of my distress, they would have been the destruction of my body and soul. Yet I durst not say anything against that opinion, but wished I had some experienced man to converse with about it; for I was brought into heaviness again by reasoning: but, alas! not one could I find.

I still continued to wait on the Lord, with fasting and prayer. One fast-day, being greatly perplexed, I opened the book on these words, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner." Then my heart was set at liberty; and I cried out, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast given me Thy word and Thy Spirit in my heart, to bear witness that Thou art no respecter of persons."

Now I found such a desire for the salvation of souls, that I hired one of the men to go and hear Mr. Wesley preach; who has since told me it was the best thing, both for him and his wife, that ever man did for them.

All that hard winter, I still fasted from Thursday night to Saturday morning; and gave away the meat that I should have eaten to the poor, spending my time in praying and reading the Scriptures.

About this time several came to see me, who, finding me at work, looked at each other like men amazed, and said they were glad to see me so well. I told them I had not had one day's sickness for six months. They said, "A man that worketh at the Treasury with you told us you had been hearing that false prophet, Wesley, and he had made you go mad, and incapable of working." "Well," said I, "here is my master: he can testify that I have not lost one day's work this half-year; nor was I ever better able to do any work in all my life. But I have heard Mr. Wesley, and have reason to bless God for it; for he is God's messenger for my good." Some words that I spoke seemed to stick in them; so that I hope Satan will lose ground by that false and ill-grounded report.

The enemy, however, now came upon me with other temptations, and prepared such instruments to destroy my soul that I feared I should be overcome, and perish at last; for wherever I went the snare was laid for me, and my soul was so harassed with my wicked dreams, that I have often awaked and found my pillow wet with tears, after thinking that the enemy would reason with me about some sin I had committed in my dream. But this drove me more to prayer, and showed me my corrupt nature in such a light that I abhorred myself, and thought the Lord never undertook to save one more like the devil in nature than I was; and it was often impressed on my mind that if I held out to the end, I should have great reason to sing louder in the Redeemer's praise than any other soul in heaven.

I would fain have known whether any one that had the grace of God in him was tempted day and night as I was ; but, my business being altogether at the court-end of the town, I had no one to open my mind to. Then I took up the Bible, and, after praying, happened on these words of St. James : " Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of glory, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

One night, after a day of fasting, I dreamed that I was in Yorkshire, in my working-clothes, going home ; and, as I went by Paul Champion's, I heard a mighty cry, as of a multitude of people in distress ; and I saw, in my dream, the large court behind John Rhodes's as full of people as they could stand by one another. All on a sudden, they began to scream and tumble one over another. I asked what was the matter ; and they told me Satan was let loose among them, and begged of me to get out of the way, for he was coming. But I said, " By the grace of God, I will not turn to the right hand or to the left for him." Then I thought I saw him in the shape of a red bull, running through the people, as a beast runs through the standing corn ; yet he did not offer to gore any of them, but made directly at me, as if he would run his horns into my heart. Then I cried out, " Lord, help me !" and immediately caught him by the horns, and twisted him on his oack, setting my right foot on his neck, in the presence of a thousand people ; and I bade them cry to Jesus, assuring them that what they had seen me do He would enable them to do. When I awoke, I was in a sweat, and my body was as much fatigued as if I had been at hard labour ; but my soul was filled with joy.

A little after this, as I was reading the Scriptures, a letter came to me. I saw it was not from my wife : then I said, "I fear here is bad news." Upon opening it, I found my daughter was dead, whom I formerly idolized ; my son was so ill that his life was despaired of ; my wife had fallen from a horse, and was lamed ; my father-in-law was dead, and my mother was sick. It then came to my mind that, when I was at the sacrament, I had made a free-will offering to the Lord of my body and soul, wife and children, and all that was near and dear to me ; but I thought, "How shall I bear it, now the Lord has taken them at my hand?" I went to prayer, and found my heart wholly resigned to the will of God. Then it came to me, "Let the dead bury their dead ; but follow thou Me." I began to read again, and the people of the house where I was scolded me, because I did not weep, wring my hands, and stamp as they did, at the loss of a child, saying I was a hard-hearted father. I replied, "I cannot tell how to choose what is best ; but God cannot err."

The May following, I was ordered to take some men, and go to Lord Onslow's, near Guildford, in Surrey, to do a piece of work that would last all summer. This was heavy tidings ; for I thought I was but weak in faith, and should be deprived of hearing Mr. Wesley, and have no one to converse with. I desired to be excused ; but all in vain. I believe I should have left my master, but I thought it would be unjust to leave him in such a busy time, when he had kept me employed all that hard winter. However, it made me cry to the Lord to go with me, and protect me from both my inward and outward enemies. And He was gracious, enabling me to reprove all that sinned in my presence ; so that a

young gentleman said to some of the men, "Of what religion is your foreman? Is he a Baptist, or is he a Quaker?" They replied, "No, sir; he is of the Church of England." He said, "He may tell you so, but he is no Churchman; for we can hardly speak at table, but he is reproving us; and if he say but one word, we cannot persuade him to drink a glass more." I overheard him, though he did not see me; and said, "Sir, you give a bad character of the Church of England, if you say a man cannot be a Churchman that reproves others for cursing and swearing, and refuses to drink to excess."

One day, the Speaker of the House of Commons came to visit my lord; and taking a view of the work, he asked me many questions about it, which I answered as well as I could. He said, "This is a fine house, and a fine estate of land about it! But what will it signify? For a piece of land, six feet long and three broad, will fit me shortly." He then fetched a deep sigh, went away, and walked alone among the trees.

While I was at Guildford I had several conversations with some Baptists. But, alas! their religion lay in notions. I found no true experience amongst them. I reasoned with them about the necessity of the new birth; and contended with many other sects that all religion without the life of Christ manifested in us would profit us nothing at last.

I heard that some, who were called serious people, said I was a dangerous man to converse with; and others shunned my company after I had talked with them. Then I thought I would leave off reproving and reasoning, for I made myself to be abhorred. I cried out, "Lord, show me what is Thy will in the matter!" and then laid me down in great heaviness.

That night I dreamed I saw a tall young person in a white vesture, whose face shone like the sun, standing at the foot of my bed, who said unto me, "Arise, and praise the Lord." I thought a great light shone round my bed, by which I saw myself defiled from the top of my head to the sole of my foot; and answered, "How can such an unclean creature show forth the praises of God?" Then I thought he showed me a river as clear as crystal, with fine green grass growing at the bottom thereof, in which he bade me wash and be clean. I thought I went at his bidding, and as soon as my feet were dipped in the water, the filth dropped from my whole body; nevertheless, the water was not defiled by it, at which I was surprised. When I came to the middle of the river, it was deeper than I was high, and I knew I could not swim; yet my soul was so filled with the sense of God's love, that my head was kept above water. I then thought I spread my hands, like a man who is going to swim, and as I laboured to swim I rose up out of the water, and was carried, as on the wings of an eagle, above the clouds, and cried, "Hosanna to the King of heaven!" And, though asleep, I sang so loud that I awoke the people of the house. I now resolved to reprove again, and seemed to do it with more authority than before; and my words began to stick to some, and cause them to reform their lives.

About Michaelmas, I came back to London: and several that used to attend Mr. Wesley's preaching at Kennington Common and Moorfields, who had also joined with him in the Foundery, came to see me; at which I was surprised, having no correspondence with them, any further than speaking one to another as we went from place to place to hear him preach.

At their first coming, I thought it was the thing I longed for; often wishing that I had some Christian friends to converse with. They said they heard I was come to town, and the love they bore me made them come to see me. I answered, "I thank you: pray how does my good friend Mr. Wesley do?" They replied, "We do not know: poor dear man, he is wandering in the dark; but we hope our Saviour will open his eyes, and let him see that he is a blind leader of the blind." Their words were as a sword running through my liver, and made me cry out, "Lord, have mercy upon me! What is the matter with him?" They answered, "Poor dear man, he is under the law, and does not know the privilege of the Gospel himself; therefore he preaches law and works." I said, "Then he is strangely altered since I left London; for when I was in town, he preached repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus; teaching the necessity of both as clearly from Scripture as any man in England could, and showing the fruits of faith as plainly as it is possible for any man to do; and I found his word to be more blessed to me than any man's I ever heard in my life." They told me that "I had never heard the Gospel in my life, except I had heard the Brethren that preached in Fetter-Lane; for they were the men that were come to lead the people into true stillness." I said, "What do you mean by true stillness?" They replied, "It is to cease from our own works, such as fasting and prayer, reading the Bible, and running to church and sacrament; and wholly to rely on the blood and wounds of the Lamb." I said, "I do not know that I ever heard either of the Mr. Wesleys bid any man trust in prayer, or reading, or going to sacrament, or giving of alms, for salvation, either in

whole or in part." But they answered, "Why doth he teach men to do these things, if they are not to be saved by them?" I replied, "If I understand Mr. Wesley rightly, he only speaks of them as Christ and His apostles speak of them; that is, to wait in them as a beggar waits for a morsel at a man's door. I never spoke to Mr. Wesley in my life; therefore, I know not what he believes, any farther than by his preaching." They told me, that most of the people who had followed him before I left London, had forsaken him, and were become happy sinners now; and wished I would go and hear the Brethren; for Mr. Wesley was only a John Baptist, to go before and prepare them for the Brethren to build up: adding, "If you go to hear him, he will bring you into bondage; and you will never be happy till you are free from the law: for we were never happy till we left him, and went to hear Mr. Molther; and till then we were under the law." I replied, "Pray were you not converted before you left Mr. Wesley?" They answered, "Yes, we had gone through a great deal of trouble, and found great peace and joy, knowing our sins were forgiven; but when we heard Mr. Molther, we found we were yet under the law: for he showed the privilege of the Gospel, and we found we had not such a privilege; for if we broke the law in any little matter, we were quite unhappy; or if we neglected to pray, or missed a sermon or two, then we were uneasy; but now we are happy, for the Lamb hath done all for us." I said, "Though He hath done His part, yet the apostle teaches us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; and we are bidden to pray always, and search the Scriptures; and St. Paul fasted often, and kept his

body in subjection, lest, when he had preached to others, himself should be a castaway. But you are become wiser than the apostle, and have got another gospel: though he said, if he or an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, let him be accursed. I am afraid you are deceived, and are seeking a happiness that is separated from holiness: if so, you are led away by a deceiving spirit; for if you commit sin, and break the righteous law of God, and still continue happy, without any conviction that God is offended with you, your consciences are seared as with a hot iron." They answered, "You are a poor unhappy man, and as blind as Mr. Wesley;" and so left me, without either praying with me or for me.

When I came to reason about what they had said, and to compare it with the words of our Lord and His apostles, I saw their scheme of salvation was as contrary to that of Christ, as darkness is to light. This drove me to prayer, and made me double my diligence in reading the Bible.

In a few days after, two more, that were a little acquainted with me, came to see me. I asked them how Mr. Wesley was. They said, they did not know, for they did not hear him now. I asked, "Why do you not?" They replied, "He denieth the faith of the Gospel." I said, "I am sorry for it; but I hope you are only wrong informed." They answered, "We have heard ourselves." I replied, "What do you call the faith of the Gospel?" They said, "Predestination and election." I told them, I thought it was not the faith of the Gospel; but it was rather for every one to believe in his heart, that he is a fallen spirit, by nature a child of wrath, and by practice an heir of hell; and that the eternal

Son of God out of love to me, a poor helpless and hell-deserving creature, laid His glory by, and for my sake fulfilled all righteousness, at last giving His body for my body and His soul for my soul; and that God, for the sake of His obedience and blood-shedding, hath forgiven all my sins. I said, "According to the light I have, this is the faith of the Gospel; and he that is a partaker of this faith hath received the Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind; power to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live a godly, righteous, and sober life." I added, "Pray, under whom were you converted?" They both replied, "Under Mr. Charles Wesley." "Did he then preach what you now call the Gospel?" They replied, "No." "Did God then reveal that to you to be the faith of the Gospel, as soon as He wrote pardon on your hearts?" They said, "No: when we were in our first love, we believed as Mr. Wesley believes; but now we see better, and hope his eyes will be opened shortly." I said, "I fear yours are become dim: for I think you are more light and unwatchful than you used to be; and you own you have lost your first love. O, remember, Christ bids you repent and do your first works, or He will remove your candlestick!" But they told me, "Do what we will, we cannot finally fall." I answered, that as far as I could learn by their words and behaviour they were already fallen: and I wished they did not make a Christ of their opinions; for though, I allow, many good men hold these opinions; yet I judge, all that were converted under the two Mr. Wesleys were at first filled with love to every man, and a perfect hatred to all sin, and were inspired with a zeal for God's glory, and the welfare of all mankind.—"Was not this your state once?"

They owned it was, till they heard Mr. Sawyers; and it was by him they saw into the electing love of God. I replied, "I fear you have sinned against light and love; and, instead of going back to the Lord, by true repentance, and seeking a fresh pardon in the blood of Christ, you have been gadding about to seek new opinions: you have gone out of the highway of holiness, and have now got into the devil's pinfold: you are not seeking to perfect holiness in the fear of God, but are resting in opinions, that give you liberty to live after the flesh: and if you continue so to live, you are safe in his hold, out of which you will be brought to the slaughter." They told me I was as stupid as Mr. Wesley. I replied, Satan had preached that doctrine to me before they did; and God had armed me against both him and them. Then they left me in my blind estate, as they called it; and I prayed that I might never turn out of the way that God had called me into.

On Sunday, I had the opportunity of hearing Mr. John Wesley once more; and his word was precious food to my soul. Then I blessed the Lord, that had still kept His servant, as an iron pillar, in the same spirit in which I left him. But I observed a great part of the congregation were strangers to me; for many of the old hearers were gone, and others come in. When I found that some had turned to the Germans, and some to the Predestinarians, I said, "O Lord, I will praise Thee; for Thou doest all things well. Thou by Thy Providence didst send me out of town when the enemy was rending Thy flock to pieces, and thereby Thy servant hath escaped the snare."

A few weeks after, I was at St. Paul's, where Mr.

John Wesley also was ; and I contrived to walk with him after sacrament : for I had often wished I could speak with him, therefore I seized this opportunity ; so we continued in discourse all the way from St. Paul's to the farther end of Upper Moorfields ; and it was a blessed conference to me. When we parted, he took hold of my hand, and, looking me full in the face, bade me take care I did not quench the Spirit. I had not such an opportunity again while I stayed in London, either with him or his brother ; but I kept close to God by fasting and prayer ; and the Lord helped me through many trials.

One night, after I had been delivered from grievous temptations, my soul was filled with such a sense of God's love, as made me weep before Him. In the night I dreamed I was in Yorkshire, going from Gomersal Hill-Top to Cleck-Heaton ; and about the middle of the lane I thought I saw Satan coming to meet me in the shape of a tall, black man, and the hair of his head like snakes : but I thought I was not afraid at all ; and I said, " Stand by me, O Lord ; and I will not turn to the right hand or to the left." Yet I thought I would not stand to fight with him as I used to do. When he came within about five paces of me, he stood : but I went on, ripped open my clothes, and showed him my naked breast, saying, " See, here is the blood of Christ." Then I thought he fled from me as fast as a hare could run.

I was still attacked by the Moravians on one side, and the Predestinarians on the other ; but the Lord enabled me to stop their mouths, and to show them that they had lost their first love. Yet they seemed to be hardened and past all conviction. And the

more I read the Scriptures, the more I was confirmed that they were fallen into carnal security; which made me pray more earnestly that God would preserve me from all the snares of the devil.

About ten days before Christmas, I went to St. Paul's; and while I was at the communion-table, I felt such an awful sense of God resting upon me, that my heart was like melting wax before Him; and all my prayer was, "Thy will be done! Thy will be done!" I was so dissolved into tears of love, that I could scarce take the bread; and after I had received, it was impressed on my mind, "I must go into Yorkshire directly." But I said in myself, "If I do, it will be ten pounds out of my way." I had determined to go at May-day; but I thought, to stay for the sake of money would be wrong, when I believed it was the will of God I should go. So I packed up my clothes, and set out. I found much of the Lord's presence all the way I went; but I had no more thought of preaching than I had of eating fire.

When I got home, I was greatly disappointed; for I expected to find many of my relations converted, as I understood they attended Mr. Ingham's preaching. But when I explained to them what it was to be converted, they said they never heard of such a thing in their lives. I told them, I knew those things by happy experience. But they begged I would not tell any one that my sins were forgiven; for no one would believe me; and they should be ashamed to show their faces in the street. I answered, "I shall not be ashamed to tell what God has done for my soul, if I could speak loud enough for all the men in the world to hear me at once." My mother said, "Your head is turned." I replied, "Yes, and my heart too, I thank the Lord." My wife told me,

she was ashamed to put her head out of doors ; for every one was talking about me, and upbraiding her with my sayings ; and she wished I had stayed in London ; for she could not live with me, if I went on as I did : for which reason, she desired that I would leave off abusing my neighbours, or go back to London. I answered, I did not care what all the people could say ; for I was determined to reprove any one that sinned in my presence. Then she cried, and said, I did not love her so well as I used to do. I replied, " Yes, I love thee better than ever I did in my life : and thou hast no reason to dispute my love ; for I have been careful to provide for thee, whether I was at home or abroad : and we have been happy in each other upwards of twelve years ; but if thou wilt seek for redemption in the blood of Christ, we shall be ten times happier than ever." She then said, " Nay, my happiness with thee is over ; for, according to thy words, I am a child of the devil, and thou a child of God." Then she wept, and said, " I cannot live with thee." I said, " Why so ? Thou shalt never want while I am able, by honest endeavours, to provide for thee. Nay," I continued, " if thou wilt not go to heaven with me, I will do the best I can for thee ; only I will not go to hell with thee for company. But I believe God will hear my prayer, and convert thy soul, and make thee a blessed companion for me in the way to heaven." After this, my wife began to be concerned about the salvation of her soul.

A few days after I had got home, David Taylor came to preach in our town, in Mr. Ingham's Society, when I went to hear him : and a dry morsel his sermon was. Several that were acquainted with him followed me, and wanted to know how I liked

the discourse. I was backward to tell them; but they pressed hard on me, and said, "Do you not think he is as good a preacher as Mr. Wesley?" I said, "There is no comparison between his preaching and Mr. Wesley's: he has not stayed long enough in the large room at Jerusalem." After they had been gone some time, they came again to ask what I meant. I said, "He is not endued with power from on high." They went and related to him what I said; and he told me since, that, if I had been present, he could have stabbed me; yet he could not rest till he went to hear Mr. Wesley in London. Then he found what was said was true; and he came down to Sheffield and into Derbyshire, preaching what he called Wesley's doctrine, and awakened and converted many scores of people, till the Germans got to him, and made him deny the law of God: then he became as salt without savour.

I went afterwards to a meeting of Mr. Ingham's, where one read in an old book for nearly an hour; then sung a hymn, and read a form of prayer. I told them that way would never convert sinners, and began to relate some of my experience; and several were struck with convictions while I was speaking, some of whom became witnesses of the same grace that God showed me.

In a little time all I said was noised abroad; and people of all denominations came to dispute with me. As soon as I came home from work, my house was filled with people, which made my wife uneasy; for she could do no work, and did not yet believe what I said was true. Generally when I came in and sat down, some one would ask me a question, and others would begin to dispute with me, while others stood by to hear.

When any began to cavil, I commonly asked, "What church do you belong to?" and if they said, the Church of England, then I replied, "Do you know your sins forgiven?" Several said, "No, nor ever expect to know it in this world." Then I replied, "You are no members of the Church of England, if you have not a full trust and confidence, that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Read the Homilies of the Church, and you will see what I say is true." I used to have the Bible and Common Prayer Book by me; and I showed them the Articles of the Church, saying, "You deny inspiration; and the Church you profess to belong to, says, 'Before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, no good works can be done.' So, if the Church speak rightly, you must be inspired by the Spirit of Christ, to enable you to bring forth good fruit, or you must be the fuel of hell. And how dare you to pray to have your thoughts cleansed by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, if you do not believe there is any such thing to be attained in this world? O! do not mock God any more, by asking for things with your mouths when you do not believe in your hearts He will grant them." But one said, "I have been with a very learned clergyman of a neighbouring church; and he told me, there was no such thing to be attained in this life." I answered, "I think you have mistaken him; for I was at that church last Sunday, and heard him declare all I have said to you." He said, "I was there, and heard no such thing mentioned." I replied, "No! did you not hear him affirm, 'that God had given power and commandment to His ministers, to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution of their sins?' And he farther declared, 'that God

pardoneth and absolveth all those that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His Gospel.' Therefore, it is plain, you never did repent, nor unfeignedly believe His Gospel, if God has not pardoned and absolved you from your sins. Else both he and all that are in priest's orders in England are false witnesses before God and man. And how many times have you besought God to 'give you true repentance; and to forgive you all your sins, negligences, and ignorances; and to endue you with the grace of His Holy Spirit, that you might amend your lives according to His holy word?' And now you say, there is no such thing! Though you may remember Mr. R. said, 'Let us beseech God to grant us true repentance, and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please Him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our lives may be pure and holy.'"

By these discourses, many were pricked to the heart, and durst not offer the sacrifice of fools any more: they prayed in good earnest that God would pardon their sins, and answer them to the joy of their hearts.

When any said, they were of the Church of Scotland, I asked them, if they did not know their sins forgiven. They told me, that they did not; nay, farther, they thought it presumption for any one to pretend to know it, or to expect such high attainments as I spoke of; and they told me I was a Papist, or I would not talk as I did. I answered, "I know not what you think of me; but I think you neither know what a Papist nor Presbyterian is; for your own mouths declare, that you are no members of the Church of Scotland. That Church disowns you; for none are allowed members thereof, but those that are effectually called. And they that

are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification. And the same Church saith, that justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins; that adoption is an act of God's free grace, by which we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of God's sons; and that sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the inner man, after the whole image of God; and all that are so effectually called, do enjoy an assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And I pray you, what have I said more? By your talking, you are the sons of Rome, and enemies to the true Protestant religion. Let me beg you to go home, and read the Assembly's Catechism, and come and talk with me again, after you have read it." Several of them did so; and came with tears in their eyes; and are now witnesses that God has power on earth to forgive sins.

I found it always in my mind not to let any depart that came to dispute with me, till we had prayed together. The first that was brought to experience the redeeming love of Christ was my own brother; and in a few days six of my neighbours.

My wife also was thoroughly convinced that she must experience the same work of grace, or perish. During the time of her convictions she was seized with a pleurisy, and her case was thought to be very dangerous. Then I besought the Lord for her with fasting and prayer. The next day she was worse; and the distress of her soul increased the disorder of her body, so that she seemed as if she could not subsist long. That night my house was filled with people, and none of them offered to dispute with me. I read several portions of Scripture to them, some

out of the Old, some out of the New Testament, and compared one with another, and prayed with them. As I was in prayer, my wife, being in the parlour, and within hearing, fainted, and was as if she had just sunk into the gulf of God's judgments. Immediately she thought she felt the Lord Jesus catch her as she was falling, and lay His hand on her side, where the disorder was, and bade her be of good comfort; telling her, "Thy sins are forgiven." When I came to the bed-side, she was just come to herself, and said, "My dear, the Lord has healed me both in body and soul! I will get up and praise His holy name;" which she accordingly did. From that hour her fever ceased, and her heart was filled with peace and love.

Now God had raised up eight witnesses to Himself in this place; and the enemies began to report, that I had forgiven such and such their sins, which made many come and talk with me.

One night I went to Adwalton, to hear Mr. Ingham preach. As soon as I got into the house, he called me into the parlour, and desired the company that was with him to go out, for he had something to say to me. When they went out, he rose up, barred the door, then sat down by me, and asked me how my wife did. When I had told him, he said, "Do you know your own heart, think you?" I answered, "Not rightly; but I know Jesus Christ; and He knows and hath taken possession of it; and though it be deceitful, yet He can subdue it to Himself; and I trust He will." He said, "Have you not deceived yourself with thinking that your sins are forgiven, and that you are in a state of grace? I was three years seeking, before I found Him." I replied, "Suppose you were, do you confine

God to be three years in converting every soul, because you were so long? God is as able to convert a soul in three days now, as He was to convert St. Paul 1700 years ago."—I then began to tell him what I had seen at London under Mr. Wesley's preaching. He said, he pitied poor Mr. Wesley, for he was ignorant of his own state; and he spoke as if he believed Mr. Wesley to be an unconverted man; at which words my corrupt nature began to stir. But it came to my mind, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" and I lifted up my heart to the Lord, and my mind was calmed in a moment. He said, "You ought not to tell people that they may know their sins forgiven; for the world cannot bear it; and if such a thing were preached, it would raise persecution." I replied, "Let them quake that fear. By the grace of God, I love every man, but fear no man; and I will tell all I can, that there is such a prize to run for. If I hide it, mischief will come upon me. There is a famine in the land; and I see myself in the case of the lepers that were at the gate of Samaria, who found provision in the enemies' camp, and, when they had eaten and drunk, and loaded themselves, said, 'We do not well; for this is a day of glad tidings: let us go and make it known to the king's household.' When I found God's wrath removed for the sake of His dear Son, I saw provision enough for my poor fainting soul, and for all the world, if they would come for it. I believe it is a sin not to declare to the children of men what God has done for my soul, that they may seek for the same mercy." He told me, I had nothing to do with the Old Testament, or to make comparisons from anything that was in it. I answered, "I have as much to

do with it as with the New Testament." He replied, "I would not have you speak any more to the people, till you are better acquainted with your own heart." I told him, I would not in his Societies, unless I was desired; but what I did in my own house, or in any other person's that requested me, he had no business with. I added, "I do not belong to you; and though I have heard you several times, it is no benefit to me; for I have experienced more of the grace of God than ever I heard you preach of it, or any one since I left London."

Soon after Mr. Ingham came out and began to preach; when I was greatly surprised; for what he had forbidden me to do, he did directly: he told them that night, they must know their sins forgiven in this world, or go to hell, if all the devils in hell could pull them in.

I still went on at my own house as before, every night; and in about three weeks my eight were increased to seventeen.

As I was explaining Rom. vii., my mother fell into deep convictions, and cried, "I am a lost sinner." I went to prayer with her; and she neither ate pleasant bread, nor took natural rest, till she found redemption through the blood of Christ. Then she came to me with tears of joy, and said, "Thank God on my behalf; for He hath dealt bountifully with me. When thou wast a lad, I had more trouble with thee than any other child; but God has more than rewarded me for all my trouble, in that He has raised thee up to show me the way of salvation." She lived about six months after, and then died in the triumph of faith. She was the first ripe fruit that God gave me of my labour.

Soon after, another of my brothers, my aunt, and

two cousins, were converted ; though still I did not attempt to preach, but read some part of the Scripture, then exhorted them to observe what they had heard, and so ended with prayer. And God wrought in a wonderful manner ; for six or seven were converted in a week, for several weeks together. All this time I had no one to converse with, except such as wanted to turn me out of the narrow path ; neither had I any correspondence with Mr. Wesley ; but still I was as one set to labour in a field alone.

After some time, Peter Bohler came into Yorkshire, and laboured while Mr. Ingham went to London. I heard him, and he pleased me well ; for at that time he spake to the purpose. When he had done, I went and took him by the hand, and thanked him for his wholesome exhortation. He asked me my name. I told him. He saluted me, and said, “ My brother, I am glad to see you ; for I have just now been talking with some that told me they were converted by you ; and I like them better than any souls I have conversed with since I came into Yorkshire.” And he added, “ I will call to see you when I come to Birstal.” So he did, and stayed with me all night, and encouraged me to speak on, and spare none. He added, “ The Lord hath called you to labour in His vineyard ; and if you do not labour, He will call you to judgment for it.” I told him, that Mr. Ingram had forbidden me ; but he said, “ He will be back from London in three weeks, then I will speak to him ; for I know that God is with you ; and I will call on you, whenever I come through this town.” So he did at that season ; and his conversation was profitable to me ; for he then spoke as contrary to the Moravians who are in London as black is to white. God blessed his word ;

for many were awakened by him at his first coming into Yorkshire.

When Mr. Ingham returned from London, he came to brother Mitchell's in our town, and sent for me. He saluted me as soon as I came in, and desired me to sit down by him, and said, "John, I believe God has called you to speak His word; for I have spoken with several since I came back from London, who, I believe, have received grace since I went; and I see God is working in a shorter manner than He did with us at the beginning; and I should be sorry to hinder any one from doing good." He said also to the brethren and sisters, "Before you all, I give John leave to exhort in all my Societies." He then took me by the hand, saying, "John, God hath given you great honour, in that He hath made use of you to call sinners to the blood of our Saviour; and I desire you to exhort in all my Societies as often as you can."

I did so; and many were struck to the heart, and were made to cry out, "Lord, save, or we perish!" So that nine or ten in a week were brought to experience the love of Jesus. Those that were of the Church of England, I exhorted to keep close to the Church and sacrament; and the Dissenters, to keep to their own meetings, and to let their light shine before those of their own community. But soon after, I learned that Mr. Ingham advised the contrary, and several began to stay at home on the Sabbath; which made me very uneasy.

One night I had been disputing with several of them, about their neglecting the ordinances, and about their speaking against inward holiness, as we were going to hear Peter Bohler, at Charles Summerscales's. When he got up, he took two

verses of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in heaven: but whosoever shall deny Me before men, him also will I deny before My Father which is in heaven." I thought if he had heard all that I had said, and had laboured to justify every word I had spoken, he could not have preached more to the purpose: for he said, to confess Jesus was to live to Him, and to honour Him with body, soul, and substance; and to deny Him, was to live to ourselves, by refusing to do what He commanded, because it was not agreeable to nature, and did not make for our temporal interest. He added, "If any one did so much as to keep the tip of his little finger to commit sin with, it would damn both his body and soul in hell."

My adversaries now hung down their heads; and complaint was made to Mr. Telchig, that Mr. Bohler preached Wesley's doctrine; and he was sent to London soon after. He came back in three weeks' time; but such a change for the worse did I never see in mortal man! for he that professed to love me as his own soul, durst not come near the door of my house, nor converse with me at all; and his word was as chaff, in comparison of what it used to be.

Then I saw what was coming on me, and the people God had given me. This made me weep in secret places before the Lord; and I desired to die, rather than live to see the children devoured by these boars out of the German wood. I saw many deluded by their soft words and fair speeches; and I thought I would exhort no more; for I was begetting children, and they slew them among the smooth stones of the brook; and they had better never have

known the way of salvation, than, after knowing it, be turned thereout. But Samuel Mitchell urged me to speak, and not to spare. Yet I found great backwardness; and often said, when I went out of my door, "Lord, Thou knowest I had rather be hanged on that tree, than go to preach; but that I believe Thou dost require it at my hand." And many a time I have said, "Except some one be converted this time, I will take it for granted that I may leave off speaking in Thy name." But, O, the condescension of the Most High! For He so far bore with my weakness, that some were converted as sure as I asked the token. For all that, I acted the part of Jonah, and fled into the fields by a wood-side, when a great congregation was gathered together, and begged me to preach to them. But the hand of the Lord was upon me; and I fell flat on my face on the ground, and thought that if ever a living man tasted the cup of the damned, I did. I then cried out, "Let me die! let me die! for why should I live to see the destruction of my people? Or wherefore should I ever speak in Thy name, and by Thy word beget children for the slaughter?" I lay about an hour with my face on the grass: but, O, the anguish my soul was in! The sufferings of our Lord and His apostles were brought to my mind, whose cup I had once desired at the Lord's hands. But now, when it was in a small degree put in my hand, I chose rather to die than to drink it.

I now began to be ashamed before the Lord, when I considered how wonderfully He had dealt with me; so that the tears began to flow, and my heart was broken within me. Then I said, "I am not my own, but Thine: therefore, Thy will be done in me, on me, and by me." In that instant the cloud broke,

and the Sun of Righteousness arose on my soul: so that I cried out, "Lord, continue with me as Thou art now, and I am ready to go to hell and preach to devils, if Thou require it." Then I came home, expecting the people to be gone; but they were waiting about the door of my house. I got up and preached to them, and that night two men declared that God for Christ's sake had forgiven all their sins.

I thought, after I had done, if I had had ten pounds, I would have given them for one hour's conversation with Mr. John Wesley; but I despaired of ever having an opportunity, except I went to London on purpose; and I said, "I am not worthy of an upright man to converse with: therefore I am encompassed about with briers and thorns."

After some time, I was told, that there were twenty preachers come to the Smith-House; and that four or five of them were clergymen who had been with Mr. Wesley; but they were now convinced of his errors, and content to be poor sinners, and hoped I should see my error in a little time, and come to the Brethren; for all of them, they said, had been as blind as I was, and as much bigoted to Mr. Wesley's notions. I told them, that what they called light, I believed to be gross darkness; for it did not agree with what the Scriptures showed to be the way to heaven. One of their exhorters said to me, that there were several of the Moravian preachers that could write as good Scriptures as the Bible; that the very power which the apostles had did rest on the Moravian preachers. I told him, I did not believe a word of it: I believed them to be a fallen people; and I prayed God that they might repent, and do their first works. I said, "I am sorry for

Mr. Ingham ; for he never will do half so much good as he has done hurt, by bringing them into this country ; for they do not labour to convert sinners, but to turn saints out of the way that leads to heaven." But he said, it was I that was wrong, for they were the most experienced men in the world ; and it was believed by many, that Count Zinzendorf was so familiar with the Lamb, that many hundreds who were now in hell would be saved by his prayers.

A few days after, they were to have a great meeting at Gomersal Field-house ; and one came and told me, that Mr. Ingham desired me to be there. Accordingly I went, but could not get into the house where they were reading the letters, nor near the door, for the multitude : so I walked into the croft, where there were about two hundred people, who had gone from the door, because they could not hear ; so I preached to them in the croft, while they read the letters within. I think there were five or six preachers, and four exhorters, and near a hundred people, who were looked upon as the chief of their Societies. Then Mr. Ingham stood up, and said, that the country-people were surprised to see so many of the Brethren come together ; they thought it prudent not to have so much preaching, till they were settled awhile, for fear it should make them persecute the Brethren ; "and I desire that none of the young men will expound, till they are ordered by the Brethren. We shall meet again this day month ; and then we will let you know what we are all to do." Then he spake to them one by one, and said, "I hope you will be obedient, and not expound any more till you have orders." They all replied, "Yes, sir." He then turned to me, saying, "John, I hope you will leave off, till you have orders from the

church." I said, "No, sir, I will not leave off: I dare not, for I did not begin by the order of man, nor by my own will; therefore, I shall not leave off by your order: for I tell you plainly, I should have left off without your bidding, but that I believed, if I did, I should be damned for disobedience." He replied, "You see these young men are obedient to the elders; and they have been blessed in their labours as well as you." I said, "I cannot tell how they have been blessed; but I think, if God had sent them on His own errand, they would not stop at your bidding." Then one of the preachers said, "The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets: therefore, they are right, and you are wrong; for they are subject." I replied, "You are not obedient to the prophets of God that were of old; for God saith by one of them, 'I have set watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem, that shall not cease day nor night;' but you can hold your peace for a month together, at man's bidding." Then, turning to Mr. Ingham, I said, "You know that many have been converted by my exhorting lately, and a great many are under convictions: what a sad thing then would it be, to leave them as they are!" He replied, "Our Saviour can convert souls without your preaching." I replied, "Yes, or yours either: and He can give us corn without ploughing or sowing, but He does not; neither hath He promised that He will." He said, "Be still one month, and then you will know more of your own heart." I replied, "With one proviso, I will." He said, "What is that?" I answered, "If you can persuade the devil to be still for a month: but if he goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and God hath put a sword into my hand, I

am determined to attack him, wheresoever I meet him; and wheresoever I meet sin, I meet Satan." Some of them said, that their ears burned on their heads, to hear me speak to such a man as Mr. Ingham. I answered, I would speak to a gentleman as I would to a beggar, in the cause of God. Mr. Ingham said, "It must needs be, that offences will come; but woe to him by whom they do come." I replied, "Sir, take care that your curse does not fall on your own head." Then he charged all the people, as they loved him and the Brethren, that they should not let me preach in their houses, nor encourage me by hearing me elsewhere. I replied, "I hope you will not hinder those who were converted under my word from hearing me; for they are my own children." He said, they would hinder them; for they were none of mine, but our Saviour's children. I answered, "I have as much right to call them my children, as St. Paul had to call the Galatians his; and if they perish by being turned out of the way through you, I will require their blood at your hand." Then Mr. Clapham said, "May not I have some private conversation with John?" Mr. Ingham answered, "Yes." And Mr. Clapham said, "He shall be my teacher while I live." So it was; for he died in the faith within a fortnight.

When I got home, there were several people at my house waiting to be instructed in the way to the kingdom. One of them cried out, "What is the matter? Are you not well? you look so pale!" I said, "I have neither pain nor sickness of body: but my soul is disordered within me; for they have bereaved me of my children, and commanded them not to hear me before my face. O, these treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously! I am sorry Mr.

Ingham should be a tool in their hands, to turn the simple out of the way ; but I hope he does it in ignorance : if he knows what he is doing, he will be a miserable man ; for it is a less crime to take a child of God, and cut his throat, and thereby send him to heaven at once, than to turn him out of the way, and to destroy both body and soul. Nevertheless, let us pray for him and them." So we went to prayer ; and when we arose from our knees, I took the Bible, requesting God to speak to me by His word. I opened on Isaiah xlix. 19, "Thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. Thy children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me : give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, removing to and fro ? and who hath brought up these ? Behold, I was left alone ; these, where had they been ?" At the reading of which words I and all that were in the house were so affected that we burst into weeping ; and God gave me one child, in answer to my prayer, that night.

It was soon spread about that Mr. Ingham and Nelson had differed ; and many said, " We shall now see an end of his new religion ! " Several of them who once professed to love me as their own lives, now became my open enemies, and laboured to draw all from me they could. They said, I made my Bible my god ! and would take it up in a scornful manner, saying, " This is John Nelson's god ! Poor man, he hurts himself much by reading in it : it would be

better for him if he would let it alone, and abide by his heart." Then I said, "Woe is me, that my mother ever bare me, to be a man of strife to all that are about me; but, Lord, I commit my cause to Thee."

So I went on preaching repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; insisting that those who believed should be careful to maintain good works. But many that once said they might bless God they ever heard me, now called me legal, and told me to my face, that I never knew the Gospel liberty, nor what it was to enjoy the poor-sinner-ship. I replied, "I do not desire to know it: I only want to know the perfect and acceptable will of God, and power to do the same." But they cried out, they had nothing to do, for the Lamb had done all for them.

After their next monthly meeting, one who had exhorted came and called me out of my house, saying he wanted to speak with me. I went out; when he told me the Brethren had sent him; and they had the same power as the apostles had: all that withstood them were soon miserable. I answered, "What do you hobble at in your speech? If you came to tell me that they have given me up into the hands of the devil, speak out, Michael." He said they had. I replied, "I hope I shall pray for them as long as I live; but do you go back and tell them, I have the devil under my heel, and he can never hurt me so long as I have the grace of God."

Soon after, I met with another that had got into the poor-sinnership, who held his neck on one side, and talked as if he had been bred up on the borders of Bohemia. He said, the Brethren were sorry for me; nay, he heard some of them say, that they would

take care of my wife and children. I told him, I would see my wife and children die on a dunghill, before I would sell my soul and the souls of my country-people.

I still kept close to God by prayer and fasting, and was daily refreshed with a sense of His love ; He also opened my mouth more and more to speak His word, so that sinners were daily converted. Samuel Mitchell encouraged me much, and went with me almost every night that I went out of town, often four or five miles, after we had done our work ; and we used to come back together the same night in all sorts of weather.

One night, after a day of fasting, I dreamed that Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley were both sitting by my fire-side, and that Mr. John said, "I will stay but a few days now ; for I must go into the North, and return at such a time and stay with you a week." The next day, when I told it, one said, "If thou hast dreamed so, they will certainly come." I replied, "I no more expect them than I expect the king to come." But in a few months after they came, and sat in the very posture I dreamed ; and Mr. John Wesley spoke the very words.

I was desired once more to go to Gomersal Field-head, to speak with Mr. Ingham. When I got there, David Taylor was with him in the parlour, and spoke kindly to me ; but when Mr. Taylor was gone, he began to talk to me about making a division among the Brethren. I told him, I did not want to make a division ; I wanted the people to be saved. But he said, "We cannot receive you nor Mr. Wesley into our community, till he publicly declares he has printed false doctrine, and you declare you have preached false." I said, "Wherein ?" He then

burst out into laughter, and said, "In telling the people that they may live without committing sin." I replied, "Do you call that false doctrine?" He answered, "I do, I do; and Mr. Wesley has written false doctrine, teaching the same errors." He quoted some words: then I said, "They are not Mr. Wesley's, but St. John's words: it is St. John says, 'Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous; and he that committeth sin is of the devil.' So, if St. John be right, every one that preacheth contrary to what Mr. Wesley has written here, and what I have preached, is a deceiver and betrayer of souls." "If that be your opinion," said Mr. Ingham, "we cannot receive you into our church." I replied, "I do not want to be one of you; for I am a member of the Church of England." He answered, "The Church of England is no church; we are the church." I said, "We! Whom do you mean?" He replied, "I and the Moravian Brethren." I said, "I have no desire to have any fellowship with you or them: it has been better for my soul since I have been wholly separated from you; and God has blessed my labours more since I was told they had delivered me up to Satan than ever before. Therefore I think it is better to have their curse, than to have communion with them." He replied, "If you think so, I have no more to say to you," and then turned his back on me.

When I went home, I met with one that had got into the *liberty*; and he told me that the devil had sent me into Yorkshire, to hinder the Brethren from having the country to themselves. I answered, "If Satan sent me, he is divided against himself; for you know, by my preaching many that were grossly wicked are turned to live a righteous life." He

said, "No men should be damned but for their own righteousness;" and when I mentioned any Scripture, he laughed me to scorn, saying, "You will never be happy till you leave off those Scripture notions, and come to your own heart, and be a poor sinner."

Now a trial came upon me from another quarter. Some of them came to my house, when I was from home, and talked with my wife, stirring her up against me, so that she was tempted to go to them, and leave me; and the temptation was so strong, that she got out of bed three times to go to them. Nay, the more I reasoned with her from Scripture, in ever so loving a manner, the more she was set against me. Then I had none but my old refuge, to get to God by prayer and fasting; and the Lord took the matter into His own hand, and showed her wherein she had been deceived, and made her a staff in my hand and a support to my soul again.

About this time one of my neighbours that used to hear me preach was going to London, and said, "I shall be glad to see Mr. John Wesley, whom you call your father in the Gospel." I replied, "If you will carry a few lines to him from me, you may see and hear him too." In this letter I desired Mr. Wesley to write to me, and, as he was my father in the Gospel, to give me some instructions how to proceed in the work that God had begun by such an unpolished tool as I. When he got to London, he wrote to me, that he had seen Mr. Wesley, and gave him the letter; who read it, and asked him some questions about me, and said, "Do you write by this night's post, and tell him I shall be at his house on Tuesday next, if God permit." I got the letter on Sunday, and was melted into tears before the Lord.

That day the Lord blessed our souls much, while we were praying that He would conduct His servant safely to us, and bless his coming amongst us; but he was detained on the road, so that it was Wednesday at nine o'clock in the forenoon when he arrived at Birstal. He sent for me to the inn, from whence I conducted him to my house; and he sat down by my fire-side, in the very posture I had dreamed about four months before, and spoke the same words I dreamed he spoke.

Before he went to Newcastle, large companies of those that had left me came to hear him; several of whom said, they never heard such a sermon in their lives, nor ever felt so much of the power of God under any man's preaching.

Some said, when Mr. Ingham came first, he was often telling of this Mr. Wesley, saying, he believed he never talked with him but it was a blessing to his soul, and extolled him above any man that ever they heard him talk of; and now they thought he exceeded all that Mr. Ingham had said about him; but they were greatly surprised, that Mr. Ingham could go through Birstal, without calling to see Mr. Wesley.

When Mr. Wesley came from Newcastle, their minds were changed; for they did not come to hear him. I asked several of them the reason, and they told me Mr. Ingham declared he preached false doctrine, and it was not safe to hear him.

However, he did not preach in vain; for God blessed his word, and his coming was a great blessing to my soul. I said to him, "Sir, you may make use of Jacob's words: 'The children thou hast begotten in Egypt before are mine:' for I freely deliver them to your care." After he had spent

about a week, he left me : and now they that stayed with me were confirmed in the truth they had received ; and many were convinced of the necessity of being born again ; so that greater multitudes than ever came to hear, and several were converted.

One Saturday night, there came a number of people that were halting between the Germans and me ; and as I preached to them, my mouth was almost stopped, and all the time it appeared to me as if I were ploughing upon a rock. Nevertheless, when I had done, and got to the fire-side, the people did not offer to go away, but stood as beggars that wanted a morsel of bread. I then took up the Bible, and opened on the Prophecy of Isaiah, where it saith, " I have blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud, and thy sins as a thick cloud : return unto Me ; for I have redeemed thee." And I said, " Hear ye the word of the Lord ! " So I read these words to them as I stood, and began to explain them, when the power of God came as a mighty wind, and many cried out, " Lord, save, or we perish ! " I fell upon my knees, and called upon God to heal the bones that were broken, and to show mercy to the poor and needy : and He heard our cry, so that seven testified that God, for Christ's sake, had blotted out their sins that night ; and most of them told me, they purposed only to hear me that time, and to have gone to the Germans the next day.

Now the people from every quarter flocked to Birstal on the Sabbath ; but, as yet, there came only three from Leeds,—Mary Shent, and two other women.

It was about May, when Mr. John Wesley came into Yorkshire, and towards Michaelmas that Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Charles Graves came

They stayed a few days, then went on to Newcastle, with an intent to return in a fortnight; but the Lord opened such a door in that place, that Mr. Wesley stayed some time longer. Mr. Graves came at the time appointed, and the Lord blessed his coming to several souls. I remember, he preached one night at Armley, and when he had done, I gave an exhortation; and the Lord applied the virtue of His precious blood to many souls that night; and for a whole week together there were some that felt the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

When Mr. Charles Wesley came back from Newcastle, the Lord was with him in such a manner, that the pillars of hell seemed to tremble: many that were famous for supporting the devil's kingdom, fell to the ground, while he was preaching, as if they had been thunder-struck. One day he had preached four times; and one that had been amongst the people all the day, said at night, twenty-two had received forgiveness of their sins that day.

I think, from the time of Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Graves's first coming, and their leaving Yorkshire, after their return from Newcastle, which was about a month, there were added to the true believers near four-score. Then they began to cry out, "The place is too strait for us: we should have a greater house!" So that the words of Isaiah, which I opened on when the Germans bereaved me of my former children, were fulfilled.

About this time William Shent was converted: and there began to be an uproar in Leeds, about his saying he knew his sins forgiven. Some, however, believed his report, and had a desire to hear for themselves; neither could he be content to eat his morsel alone, for his heart panted for the salvation of all his neighbours.

The Christmas following, he desired me to go and preach at Leeds; but when I gave notice of it to the Society, they advised me not to go till we had kept a day of fasting and prayer. So we humbled ourselves before the Lord on the Friday, and on Sunday night I went to Leeds, several of the brethren accompanying me. As we were going over the bridge, we met two men, who said to me, "If you attempt to preach in Leeds, you need not expect to come out again alive; for there is a company of men that swear they will kill you." I answered, "They must ask my Father's leave; for if He have any more work for me to do, all the men in the town cannot kill me till I have done it."

When we got to brother Shent's, he had provided a large empty house to preach in, and it was well filled with people. As soon as I got upon the stairs, I felt an awful sense of God rest upon me; and the people behaved as people that feared God, and received the word with meekness.

Now the Armley Society became a nursing mother to the new-born souls at Leeds; for there were several steady souls at Armley, who had stood from the beginning without wavering; and I trust we shall meet together in heaven.

Some time after we had begun at Leeds, Mr. John Bennet, from Chinley in Derbyshire, came to our town, and sent for me to the inn. I did not know him; but by his dress I took him to be a preacher. I said, "I do not know you: pray what is your name?" He told me. I asked him, if he came from Mr. Wesley: he said, No. He was not in connexion with him; he was in fellowship with the Moravian Brethren: but he had had a great opinion of Mr. Wesley for some time, till he saw a little pamphlet

which Mr. Wesley had lately published, which he styles, "The Character of a Methodist," and it turned his mind. I asked, "Sir, what do you find wrong there?" He replied, "There is too much perfection in it for me." I answered, "Then you think a less degree of holiness will fit you for heaven, than what is mentioned there: pray what are the words you stumble at?" On his telling me, I said, "They are the words of St. John." But he said, "We know by experience that there is no such thing to be attained in this life." I replied, "If your experience does not answer to what St. Paul and St. John speak, I shall not regard it:" and when I mentioned some passages of Scripture, he did not believe that what I said was Scripture. I pulled out my Bible, and showed him the words; and when he had read them, his countenance changed, and he cavilled no more.

When we met again, we seemed to be of one heart and judgment; for God revealed His will to him soon after he had parted with me, and made him an instrument to turn many to righteousness, and to bring me and my brethren to preach in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire.

The first time I went, he met me at Marsden, to conduct me into Cheshire; but as I went over a great common, a little behind Huddersfield, a dog leaped out of the heath, and came and smelled at my leg, and walked by my side for near a mile: he then went to the houses that were a little out of the way, and bit several dogs, and came running after me again, and walked by my side till he saw another house, where he fought with a dog; then followed me again. Thus he went on for about five miles, and went with me into the inn at Marsden, when he sat

down by my side. There were several men in the house, whom I asked, if any of them knew whose dog that was ; but none of them could tell. I said, "I think he is mad ;" but they laughed me to scorn. Soon after, another dog came in, and he went and bit him directly, and ran out, and bit four more ; and then the men pursued and killed him. When I saw that God had kept me in such imminent danger, I was greatly humbled before Him.

As Mr. Bennet and I went over to Stanedge, we met David Taylor, who had got so much into the poor-sinnership, that he would scarcely speak to me. He called Mr. Bennet to a distance, and said, he was sorry that he was going to take me into Derbyshire ; for I was so full of law and reason, that I should do a great deal of hurt wherever I preached.

I preached twice that afternoon ; once at Hopkin-pit, in Lancashire, and the other time at Woodley, in Cheshire. It was given out, unknown to me, for me to preach at Manchester Cross on the Sunday in the afternoon. About ten people went with me from Mr. Lackwood's to Manchester. When we arrived there, I do not know but there might be two thousand people gathered together at the Cross ; and most of them behaved well. But when I was in the middle of my discourse, one at the outside of the congregation threw a stone, which cut me on the head : however, that made the people give greater attention, especially when they saw the blood run down my face ; so that all was quiet till I had done, and was singing a hymn. Then the constable and his deputy came and seized me and Mr. Bennet, and said, "You must go before the justice." I asked, "By what order ?" He held up his staff, saying that was his warrant, and he would make me go. I

answered, "I will not resist; for if I have done anything contrary to the law, I ought to suffer by the law." He said, I should suffer for what I had done. Then he began to strike the people that crowded about us. As soon as he and his deputy could get through the multitude, they out-ran us: when I called and said, "Stay, gentlemen; for we cannot get through the people as fast as you." But the people crowded about us in such a manner, that we saw the constable no more. Afterwards we rode to Jonathan Holmes's. That night we had a blessed meeting; and the Lord was much with us all the time I stayed in those places.

Soon after, Mr. John Wesley came into Yorkshire again; and the Lord blessed his coming to many souls. When he set out for Newcastle, he desired me to go to Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, and to spend a few days there, among some people that had once run well, but were turned out of the way by one that had come down from London, who had got into the poor-sinnership, and was made free from the righteous law of God, and from all ordinances and good works. He brought many of them into his own liberty; so that they sold their Prayer-Books, left off reading and praying, and followed the motions of their own minds, which they called the Lamb in their hearts. But one or two remained under the law, as they called it; that is, they still continued to read the Bible, and durst not leave off prayer, nor any other ordinance that Christ had appointed. These came to Epworth to seek the pure Gospel; and when they heard Mr. Wesley, they said, "his word was as sweet wine to a thirsty soul."

I set out with a great sense of my own weakness, and was ready to turn back: then I opened my

Bible where these words were written, "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the ground." I cried out, "Lord, give me strength and understanding for the work, if Thou hast called me to it." I opened my book again, on Isaiah xiv. 1, "The Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land : and the strangers shall be joined with them." That night I came to Epworth, and preached to a large congregation.

Next morning, I and a man that belonged to Grimsby, and a boy about twelve years of age, set out on foot for Grimsby ; but night came upon us when we were five miles short of it, and, there being no public-house near, we went to several farm-houses to ask for lodging, but could get none. Then we went to a poor house, where I prevailed with the people to let the boy lie with two of their own boys ; and I said to the man, "Let us go and seek a bed somewhere else, or a stable to lie in." As we went on in the dark, we saw a light at a small distance, and we went over a field to it. I knocked at the door, and they bade us come in : there were four men, three women, and two boys, sitting by the fire. As soon as I entered, I said, "Peace be to this house ;" at which words the people started up as if I had thrown fire at them. I said, "We are two wayfaring men ; and if you will entertain us for a night, we will satisfy you." They got us a good supper, and made up a good bed. I talked to them about the way of salvation, and went to prayer with them ; and they were so affected, that the master and the mistress talked to me two hours after we were in bed. The next morning, after breakfast, I went to pay the woman ; but she said her husband charged her to take nothing, but, on the contrary, to

give us some money to support us on the road ; but I replied, " Not one farthing will we have ; and if you will not take our money, I pray God reward you with everlasting consolation ! "

We then went where we had left the boy, and paid the people for him, and set out for Grimsby, which we reached by ten o'clock. The people soon heard that I was come, and flocked to me directly, when I prayed with them, and began to exhort ; but many of them despised my words, saying, I was too legal for them. I then took up my Bible, and said, " Hear ye the word of the Lord ! " So I read two or three verses, and bade them try themselves by that standard : then I read in another place, and said, " If you will compare your consciences with these scriptures, you may see what state your souls are in. " One woman turned pale, and began to tremble, saying, " I clearly see we are deluded, and that what we called the Lamb in our hearts is nothing but the devil. " Then she cried out, " Alas ! alas ! what must we do ? " We went to prayer again, and God made the kingdom of Satan to shake once more in that place.

The second night a schoolmaster sent me word that he would give me leave to preach in his school, which would hold several hundreds of people : but those that had fallen into the poor-sinnership told me, if I did, they durst not go to hear me ; for they should be mobbed, and I should be killed. I said, " As the gentleman has made me the offer, I will accept it, and, by the grace of God, will preach if there were as many devils in it as there are tiles on it. " Accordingly I went, and it was well filled from side to side, and the people behaved well ; I found great liberty in speaking ; and when I had

done, several cried out, "This is the way of salvation!"

When I came back to brother Blow's, those that had been shorn of their strength confessed their fearfulness, and said, "While we continued in the spirit in which we were converted, we were as bold as lions. O! what shall we do to recover our strength?" I told them to humble themselves before the Lord with prayer and fasting, and He would snatch them out of the snare of the devil, and give them back their first love.

I preached again the next morning, and set out for Epworth. In my way I stopped at Ferry, where I preached at four in the afternoon, and got into Epworth by seven that evening.

When I came there, so large a company were gathered together, that I could not get into the house, nor yet one-third of the people, though it was dark and snowed. However, I desired them to hand me out a chair: so I stood up in the snow, and preached, and they behaved as well as ever I knew a congregation in my life; and it appeared that God blessed His word to many souls that night.

When I returned home, I found God had opened the mouth of Jonathan Reeves, and blessed his word to numbers about Birstal; and we laboured together for some time, till I returned into Mr. Bennet's circuit.

I went into the Peak to preach at Monyash, when a clergyman, with a great company of men that worked in the lead-mines, all being in liquor, came in just as I began to give out the hymn. As soon as we began to sing, he began to halloo and shout, as if he were hunting with a pack of hounds, and so continued all the time we sang. When I began to

pray, he attempted to overturn the chair that I stood on; but he could not, although he struck so violently with his foot, that he broke one of the arms of the chair quite off. When I began to preach, he called on his companions to pull me down; but they replied, "No, sir; the man says nothing but the truth. Pray, hold your peace, and let us hear what he has to say." He then came to me himself, took me by the collar of my shirt, and pulled me down; then he tore down my coat cuffs, and attempted to tear it down the back; then took me by the collar, and shook me. I said, "Sir, you and I must shortly appear at the bar of God, to give an account of this night's work." He replied, "What! must you and I appear before God's bar together?" I said, "As sure as we look one another in the face now." He let go my throat, took my Bible out of my hand, and, turning it over and over, said, "It is a right Bible; and if you preach by the Spirit of God, let me hear you preach from this text;" which was, "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men in the city." I got up, and began to preach from this text; and when any offered to make a noise, the miners said, "Hold your peace, or we will make you; and let us hear what he will make of the parson's text." As I went on, the parson said, "That is right; that is true." After a while he looked round, and saw many in tears; then he looked at me, and went away, leaving me to finish my discourse in peace. All the rest of the circuit I had peaceable meetings; and the Lord kept still adding to the number of His children.

At my return home, I began to preach in the open street, at brother Shent's door, in Leeds, and great companies flocked to hear me. The first time I stood

up in the street, I was struck on the head with an egg and two potatoes ; but that neither hindered me from speaking, nor the multitude from hearing. I heard that several serious people, as soon as I had done, went to an old clergyman to ask his advice about the doctrine I had preached, and told him as much of my sermon as they could. He answered, he hoped no one had disturbed me for preaching that doctrine ; and on being told that some had thrown potatoes at me, and spoiled my wig and coat with a rotten egg, he said, he would rather lose his arm than throw at a man for preaching such doctrine, for that was the marrow of the Gospel. Many lost their prejudice by his word, and embraced the truth with joy ; so that I preached in the streets at Leeds every other Sunday morning, with very little disturbance.

After some time, I went into Lincolnshire again ; and the congregation was so large at Grimsby, that I was obliged to stand upon a table at brother Blow's back-door for several days together. As I was preaching, the minister and three men came to play at quoits, as near the people as they could get ; but with all their playing and shouting they could not draw any one from hearing.

Some friends from Tetney and Clearthorps prevailed with me to go to a shepherd's house near the sea-coast. There was a large company gathered together in that desert, and I opened my book on Galatians i. 3 : " Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." I felt much of the Lord's presence, and the power of God was so

great among us, that the people fell flat on their faces, or kneeled down on their knees, so that there was not one left standing, and their cry was so great, that my voice could not be heard: then I fell on my knees, and called upon the Lord to heal the bones that were broken; and I believe many will praise God for that meeting to all eternity.

On my return to Epworth, I was desired to go by Hainton, and several from Grimsby went with me. When we got there, William Fenwick told me, there was a company of men at the bowling-green, who had made themselves almost drunk, on purpose to kill me. I answered, that God was my defence, and I believed He would deliver me from them all. As soon as they heard I was come, they all left the bowls, and came to William Fenwick's, many of them with sticks, about two feet long, and as thick as a man's wrist: some of them began to sing a psalm, and others to curse and swear; but I reprov'd them, and they had no power to meddle with me. At the appointed hour, I went into the street, and spoke to them in the name of the Lord; and God put a bridle in the jaws of the wicked, so that they stood patiently to hear, while I was reasoning with them about the necessity of being made holy here, that we may not be damned eternally. A lusty, red-faced gentlewoman exclaimed aloud, "I am a Papist, and believe I shall be cleansed in purgatory." When I had done, I said, "I appeal to all your consciences that I have not spoken my own words, but the words of the Lord." A gentleman answered, "We allow all you say is true; yet you deserve to be set in the stocks for delivering it in the street."

As I went into the house, one hit me with an egg on my head, and the people crowded so fast into the

house that I could scarcely turn myself. At last, I got to sit upon a dresser, and spoke to them for an hour, and God began to work on several of them; but as soon as they began to tremble, and cry out, "Lord, save, or we perish," others made all the haste they could to get out of the house. When I got to Epworth, I found the people much in earnest, and my own soul was greatly blessed in speaking to them.

After I had laboured in Yorkshire awhile longer, Mr. John Wesley sent for me to London. But, by this time, I had almost worn out my clothes, and I did not know where the next should come from: my wife said, I was not fit to go anywhere as I was. I answered, "I have worn them out in the Lord's work, and He will not let me want long." Two days after, a tradesman in our parish, that did not belong to our Society, came to my house, and brought me a piece of blue cloth for a coat, and a piece of black cloth for a waistcoat and breeches: so I see the Lord is mindful of them that trust in Him.

As soon as I well could, I set out for London on foot; but one of my neighbours was going, and he took my place, and let me ride sometimes. I preached at Nottingham Cross as I went.

I stayed a few days at London; then Mr. Richards and I set out for Oxford. We both preached at High-Wycomb as we went.

When we came to Oxford, we met three young gentlemen in their gowns in the street; but I think I never heard a soldier or sailor swear worse than they did. Mr. Richards, being first, and a collegian himself, said, "Gentlemen, I am ashamed to hear you: it is a sad thing that you should come here to learn to be guides to others in the way to heaven,

and continue to go in the way to destruction yourselves!" One of them said, with a curse, "What, are you a Presbyterian?" When I spoke, another of them said, "These chaps belong to poor Wesley:" so they went away.

We spent a Sabbath at Oxford; and some of the collegians behaved very rudely as I was preaching in the evening; but the Lord put His hook in their jaws, and kept them from doing any harm to the people, or hindering me in my discourse.

The next day we got to Cirencester, where we stayed two nights. One of the brethren then went with us to Bristol. On all this journey we had but one horse between Mr. Richards and me.

After tarrying a few days at Bristol, and preaching once at Bath, Mr. Wesley, Mr. Downs, and I set out for Cornwall. Mr. Downs and I had but one horse; so we rode by turns. Mr. Wesley preached at Taunton Cross and Exeter Castle, as we went. We generally set out before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shepherd.

One day, having travelled twenty miles without baiting, we came to a village, and inquired for an inn; but the people told us there was none in the town, nor any on our road within twelve Cornish miles: then I said, "Come, brother Downs, we must live by faith." When we had stood awhile, I said, "Let us go to yonder house, where the stone porch is, and ask for something:" so we did, and the woman said, "We have bread, butter, and milk, and good hay for your horse." When we had refreshed ourselves, I gave the woman a shilling; but she said, she did not desire anything. I said, "I insist upon it."

We got to Bodmin that night; but it was late before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shepherd arrived, having

lost the path on the twelve-mile common, and found the way again by the sound of the bells. The next day we got to Gwennap, and the day after to St. Ives. The following day I worked at my own business, and continued to work for several days.

When I had done my job of work, I went to St. Just, and preached at the cross to a large company of well-behaved people. Then I went to the Land's End, and preached the same evening. Next morning, which was Sunday, I came to Morva church: after service, I preached there, and in the evening at Zunnor.

When I had been out a week, I returned to St. Ives, and found brother Downs in a fever, so that he was not able to preach at all. All that time, Mr. Wesley and I lay on the floor: he had my great-coat for his pillow, and I had Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament for mine. After being here near three weeks, one morning, about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over, and, finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying, "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer: I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but on one side." We usually preached on the commons, going from one common to another, and it was but seldom any one asked us to eat and drink.

One day we had been at St. Hilary Downs, and Mr. Wesley had preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was a shaking among the people as he preached. As we returned, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that ever I saw for getting food. Do the people think we can live by preaching?" I said, "I

know not what they may think; but one asked me to eat something as I came from St. Just, when I ate heartily of barley-bread and honey." He said, "You are well off: I had a thought of begging a crust of bread of the woman where I met the people at Morva, but forgot it till I had got some distance from the house."

One Sunday, having been at the Land's-End in the morning, and at Morva at noon, I came to Zunnor to preach at night, and got there before the afternoon service began. In the sermon, the minister said, "Here is a people who hold that damnable Popish doctrine of justification by faith; therefore, I beg you not to hear them." After the service was over, I went about two hundred yards from the church, and got upon a rock, where I began to sing a hymn; and I believe the whole congregation came to hear me. According to the light I had, I showed what was the faith of the Gospel, and what the faith of the Church of Rome.

I stayed a fortnight after Mr. Wesley was gone, and I found my soul was much blessed among the people. When Mr. Wesley arrived at Bristol, he wrote to me, and desired me to call at three different places to preach, in my way to Bristol.

When I left Captain Hitchin's, I was benighted on the twelve-mile common, and was wet to the skin; but, by the providence of God, I came to the house where I had called in going down. I knocked at the door, and the woman knew my voice, and said, "The Lord bless you! Come in." As soon as I went into the house, they pulled off my wet clothes, and put me on dry ones, and got me something warm for supper: they took my wet clothes out of my bags, which they rinsed, dried, and ironed. We

sang a hymn, went to prayer, and I gave them an exhortation that night. The next morning, the man rose up, and alarmed that and another village; so that by seven o'clock I had about three hundred to preach to, who all seemed to receive the word with joy. I heard soon afterward, that the man and his wife who received us had received the Lord that sent us.

The next night I came to Sticklepath, and preached to a large congregation in a field. As I was speaking, a woman, who had been brought up a Quaker, began to tremble, and in a little time sunk down upon the grass, and lay till I had done. Then they brought her to Mrs. Bridgood's, where I was; and I prayed with her. Although most of the company were Quakers, yet they desired me to sing, and read several of our hymns.

The next morning, before I began to preach, the woman that fell down, with two more, came into the room where I was: she said, "I had no rest in the night, the anguish of my soul was so great; and I desire thee to pray with me." We went to prayer; and when we rose up, she said, "O praise the Lord! for to-day is the day of Pentecost with me."

After I had done preaching, an exciseman, who came from Crockern-wells, told me, that it was given out for me to preach there at ten o'clock that forenoon, and he was to conduct me. So we set out directly. I preached in an orchard. Among the rest of the people were a clergyman and his wife. All behaved well.

Almost as soon as I alighted at the Oxford Inn, in Exeter, a man came to conduct me to the place where I was to preach. There was a clergyman in the next room, who soon came into the room where

I was, and asked me how the two Mr. Wesleys did, and insisted upon my supping with him. I told him, I must go to preach first. He said he would go with me; which he did. As I was preaching, the clerk of the parish fell down, and after him another man and woman: they did not cry out, but lay groaning for mercy. After I had done, and the greater part of the people were gone, I went to prayer with them that were in distress.

As we went back to the inn, the clergyman said, "I dare not pray as you did to-night: you prayed that God would give you some fruit in that place, as He had done in others. I have been a preacher for many years, and I cannot say that I have had any fruit; that any one has been converted by my preaching in all my life." I replied, "If you be not converted yourself, and have not a greater commission than man can give you, you may preach all your days, and never convert one soul."

When we were at supper, he asked me how Mr. Wesley went on; and when he heard how he lived, and how he was treated by wicked men, he said, "If that be the way to heaven, I think I shall never get there: my flesh is not brass, nor my bones iron." I replied, "You do not know what you can bear, till you come to be tried." He said, "Well, I believe Mr. Wesley is the greatest man in the kingdom; but I think he uses too much austerity." We talked till eleven o'clock, then parted in love. I saw him no more, but have heard since that he receives Mr. Wesley to preach in his church, and that God has made him an instrument of converting sinners.

I preached the next morning, and then set out for Axminster, where I preached in the open street, at

three in the afternoon, to a well-behaved people, though it was the second day of the fair.

The next day I went to Thorngrove, near Middlesey. That night God blessed His word to many, as appeared afterwards. One gentlewoman was convinced that night, who four years after sent my wife four guineas, which came in good time; for she had borrowed four guineas of a neighbour to buy a cow, and the time for payment was come, and she had not money to pay.

When I got to Bristol, I found my soul much blessed among the people; and in those ten days there were several that found the Lord.

In my return home, I preached at Stroud, and several other places in my way to Wednesbury, whither I came not long after the people had been mobbed in such a cruel manner. I preached in an open yard to very large congregations of people, several times. Some of the mobbers came to hear me, but all behaved well: so He who stops the raging of the sea can stay the madness of the people.

After spending a few days there, I set out for Nottingham, and stayed there two days. I preached at the Malt-cross on the Sabbath, to a large congregation, in great peace; but Monday being a rejoicing day, they had bonfires in the market-place, and some came with squibs to disturb me as I was preaching. One of them threw a squib on fire close to my heels, but a woman kicked it away: the man caught it up again to throw at me, but it burst in his hand, and he went away shaking his head. Another came on the low side of the cross with a design to throw one in my face; but I did not turn my face that way so soon as he expected, and the

squib burst in his hand. As soon as I had done, a serjeant of the army came to me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "In the presence of God, and all this people, I beg your pardon: for I came on purpose to mob you; but when I could get no one to assist me, I stood to hear you, and am convinced of the deplorable state my soul is in, and I believe you are a servant of the living God." He then embraced me, and went away weeping.

When I got home, I found my wife much better, though never likely to recover her former strength; owing to the persecution she met with at Wakefield, when Mr. Larwood was mobbed there. After they had abused him, she, with some women, set out for Birstal; a mob followed them into the fields: when they overtook them, she turned about and spake to them, upon which all the men returned without touching them; but the women followed them till they came to a gate, where they stopped them: they damned her, saying, "You are Nelson's wife, and here you shall die." They saw she was big with child; yet beat her on the body so cruelly, that they killed the child in her womb, and she went home and miscarried directly. This treatment she had reason to remember to her life's end; but God more than made it up to her, by filling her with peace and love.

There had been some disturbance at Leeds; and I was the first that stood up after, at brother Shent's door. A number of men had protested they would pull down the first man that attempted to preach there. But if the fear of God could not restrain them, the fear of the magistrates did; so that they did not meddle with me: only some boys threw about a peck of turnips at me, but not one of them hit me.

That was a blessed morning to many souls: two, that had been enemies, were struck to the ground, and cried out for the disquietude of their souls. I preached often afterwards, with little disturbance, and believers were multiplied in Leeds.

After I had stayed a few months in Yorkshire, I went a third time into Lincolnshire. At Epworth we had peaceable and blessed meetings. But when I came to Grimsby, the minister got a man to beat the town drum through the town, and went before the drum, and gathered all the rabble he could, giving them liquor to go with him to fight for the Church. When they came to Mr. Blow's door, they set up three huzzas, and the parson cried out, "Pull down the house! pull down the house!" But no one offered to touch the house till I had done preaching. Then they broke the windows, till they had not left one whole square about the house; and as the people went out they abused them, till some of the mob began to fight their fellows for abusing the women; so that most of the people got away while they were fighting one with another. Not long after, the minister gathered them together again, and gave them more drink: then they came and broke the stanchions of the windows, pulled up the paving in the streets, which they threw in at the windows, and broke the household goods in pieces; the parson crying out, "If they will not turn out the villain, that we may put him in the black ditch, pull down the house."

While they were drumming, cursing and swearing, fighting and breaking the goods, one of their neighbours, who was not a hearer, went to an alderman, and said, "Some order must be taken with these men; for, if they be suffered to go on as they do,

they will ruin William Blow, and I fear they will kill somebody." But the good alderman said he would do nothing but lend them his mash-tub to pump the preacher in. Then the mob fell out again one with another, and dispersed, after labouring from seven till almost twelve at night. The parson said to the drummer, "I will reward you for your pains: but be sure to come at five in the morning; for the villain will be preaching again then." So the drummer did, and began to beat just as I was going to give out the hymn. When he had beat for near three quarters of an hour, and saw it did not disturb us, he laid down his drum, and stood to hear for himself; and the tears presently ran down his cheeks. When I had ended, he expressed great sorrow for what he had done to disturb us. As he and some others went up the town, the parson met them, and bade them to be sure to come at seven o'clock. He said, "No, sir; I will never beat a drum to disturb yonder people any more, while breath is in my body." So that we had great peace in our shattered house that night, and God's presence amongst us.

The next day I went to Hainton; and when I had done preaching, a grave, elderly gentleman came to me, and said, "Your doctrine is sound, but it would far better become a church." I answered, "Sir, if a man were hungry in the midst of a desert, and wholesome food were brought him, he would not refuse to eat because he was not in the dining-room." He replied, "You are right, you are right. I thank you kindly, and wish you well, and that much good may be done by you wheresoever you preach; for good food is good wherever it is eaten."

When I got to Epworth, I was told the clerk was

drunk, and had been swearing he would pull down the preacher, and take him to such an ale-house, where the curate and some other men were drinking. In the evening, as I was preaching, he came staggering, and rushed in among the people, crying, "Stand out of the way; for I must have the preacher: he must go before my master, that is in such an ale-house." One asked him where his warrant was: he said he had none, but his master had sent him, and he would make me go with him. The people bade him hold his peace, or get about his business; and when he began to be rude, one took him up in his arms, and laid him down upon a dunghill, and there left him.

After I got home, it was much impressed upon me, that some trial was coming upon me; and several times when I was preaching, I have said, "There is a cloud gathering, and it will burst over my head. O, pray for me!" After this, I stayed some time in Yorkshire, and sinners were daily turning from their evil ways; so that several ale-house keepers cursed me to my face, and told me I ought to be transported, for I preached so much hell and damnation, that I terrified the people so, that they durst not spend sixpence with a neighbour.

Some time after I met a gentleman, as I was riding to Leeds, who said something about the weather. I answered, "The Lord orders all things well." He presently said, "I know you, for I have heard you preach; but I do not like you: you lay a wrong foundation for salvation. Do you think that the blood of another man will save me?" I replied, "St. Paul saith, 'Other foundation can no man lay but Christ Jesus;' but you say that is a wrong foundation. Upon what terms do you expect to be

saved?" He said, "By good works." I answered, "You will be the first that got to heaven that way. But, suppose you could, what would you do when you came there?" He said, "What do others do there?" I answered, "They sing, 'Glory to God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, that was slain, and hath redeemed us by His blood!'" But your song will be, 'Glory be to myself; for I have quickened my own soul, and qualified myself for heaven!' O sir, what a scandalous song will you have to sing! It will make discord in heaven." He turned pale, and said nothing for some time. When he had rode awhile, he said, "All the Lord requires of us is, to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God." I answered, "Do you expect to stand or fall by that scripture?" He said, "I do." "Then," I replied, "you are lost for ever, if you are to go to heaven for doing justly, for loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. I appeal to your conscience, if you have not come short in every one of these duties. Have you dealt with every man as you would have him do to you, in all circumstances, ever since you knew good from evil? Suppose you had, have you dealt justly with God, and employed every talent that He has committed to your charge to His glory,—both time, wisdom, and learning; house, land, wealth, and trade? If you have used any one talent, and not to the glory of God, you have robbed Him." Then I spoke to the other two. He said, "There is repentance." But I replied, "Not for you; for you are to be saved for doing justly, for loving mercy, and walking humbly with God: if you come short of these duties, you must be damned." He said, "Lord have mercy on me! you are enough to make

any man despair." "Yes," I said, "of saving himself, that he may come to Jesus Christ, and be saved." He argued no more; but heard me patiently, and parted friendly.

One Sunday I was at chapel, where the minister laboured much to persuade the people that there was no such thing as the forgiveness of sins in this world. When he had done, he sent the clerk to desire me to call upon him. I did so, and he told me he understood I was he that went about to delude the people, telling them they might know their sins forgiven in this world; and there is no such thing. He said, he did not know his own sins were forgiven, and he had talked with several learned divines, and there was not one of them that did; and several believed they must never know it till the day of judgment. I answered, "Sir, what will become of their souls till then? will they lie in heaven or hell?" He said, it was an unfair question. I replied, "Sir, if what you say be true, every time we use the Church prayers we offer the sacrifice of fools, and mock God to His face: for this day, you and all the congregation, in my presence, prayed that God would forgive you all your sins, negligences, and ignorances; and you affirmed, in the presence of God, that He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the Gospel. If He do not, you are a false witness, and a deceiver of the people; yea, and a contemner of the word of God; for St. Peter saith, 'To Him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in Him doth receive forgiveness of their sins.' And St. Paul saith, 'By Him all that believe are justified from all things.' He doth not say, they shall be justified at the day of judgment, but 'all that believe are justi-

fiel.' And St. John saith, 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His name's sake.' " He replied, "You take some part of Scripture." I answered, "I leave all the rest to you to contradict me, if you can. For this day you have denied the faith of the Church you call yourself a minister of; as she saith, 'Before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, no good work can be done.' But you say, there is no such thing as inspiration to be expected in this age. And yet you pray that God would cleanse the thoughts of your heart by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit!" Then he said, "You have too good a memory for me. Landlady, bring us a pint of ale."—So I left him.

One man in our town that had run well for a season, but had turned from us, and was become a happy sinner, now invited the Germans to preach at his house. One of their chief preachers came, and said, (after preaching,) they had been asking their Saviour about preaching in Birstal; and the Lamb had made it plain to them the time was come that they should have a church in Birstal: which when one came and told me, I said, "God hath showed me to the contrary; and you may go and tell the preacher, that the lamb who told them so is a liar." They came several weeks together, but to no purpose. Then the preacher said, "It is not the Lamb's will that they should come any more." When they told me, I replied, "Their lamb is much given to change: he hath not continued in one mind for three months."

After this, as I was going to Staincliffe to work at my business, about five in the morning, I met with a Dissenting minister. He stopped me, and said, "John,

you go often this way. I would have you come and spend an hour with us; for I want to talk with you." I answered, "I have not an hour to spare; for I go to my work at five in the morning, and work till six at night: then I have always somewhere to go and preach; so that I have scarcely time to read a chapter in the Bible, but at my dinner-hour; and sometimes I have to preach in that hour." He said, "What do you mean by redemption? Do you mean that Christ hath died for all?" I replied, "I do believe He did, or He cannot judge all: for Truth itself cannot condemn any man because he will not believe a lie." He said, "What do you mean?" I answered, "Every man is bound to believe that by nature he is a child of wrath, and by wilful sin an heir of hell; and that while he was in that lost condition, the eternal Son of God, for his sake, took upon Him our nature; and did in that nature fulfil all righteousness for him, and, at last, gave His soul an offering for sin: he must consciously believe that the Lord Jesus Christ loved him, and gave Himself for him, or he must be damned eternally. And if the Lord did not give Himself for him, he must be damned because he does not believe a lie. But you know it is said, 'He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; and He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due season.' And St. John saith, 'He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.' Sir, there are numberless scriptures that say He did die for all; but show me one that saith He did not die for all." He answered, "If He died for all, why are not all saved?" I replied, "Let the Lord answer for Himself:—'Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.'" He then said,

“You say, ‘It is of him that willeth.’” I answered, “It is Christ that saith, ‘Ye will not come unto Me.’ Do not pretend to be wiser than the Lord that made you. You say you will have no *ifs*; but I say, if you give the promise without the condition, God will take your name out of the book of life. I hope you will weigh these things. I shall be glad to converse with you at some other opportunity; for my time is now expired.”

Almost every day, some came to dispute with me as I was at work. And I saw every day more clearly that he who insists on men being saved from their sins by Christ in this world, is like a speckled bird, for all sects and parties, that have not the life of Christ in them, to mock at.

One day, two Quakers fell upon me very hotly, and told me I was carnal, or else I should not make use of carnal ordinances, not seeking the living among the dead. I told them, those ordinances they called carnal, I knew to be spiritual; for God had refreshed my soul in the use of them by His Spirit. “You say I seek the living among the dead: but I do not; for I have found the Lord of life in the great congregation. But if I would leave the Church, where must I go to find a people that are truly alive to God?” They told me, if I were right, I should come to them; for they were the only people that had spiritual worship amongst them. They talked much about George Fox and William Penn, and said, “What thinkest thou of them?” I answered, “I think well of them; but their graces will profit you nothing, except the same change be wrought in your hearts as was in them. Neither do I see that you are God’s people any more than those who go to church; for the Lord has set a

mark upon His children, and it will rest on them as long as the world endureth." They asked, "What is that mark?" I replied, "They are hated of all men that know not God. For they who live after the Spirit must be persecuted by those that live after the flesh. I do not see that this is your case, any more than that of those who go to church. Your forefathers had that spot of God's children; but you have lost it as much as the Church." Then one of them turned pale, and said, "Do you believe that God hath no people in the land but the Methodists?" I replied, "I did not say so." He said, "They are the only people that are persecuted now." They then went away, seemingly much discontented.

As I was passing through part of Lancashire, I found the Lord reviving His work among the people. After I had done preaching at our place, a man and his wife came to me, both in tears, and desired me to pray with them. I did so. When I had done, I was exhorting them to abstain from evil, and to continue in prayer, and told them, God would show mercy unto them, for the obedience and bloodshedding of His dear Son. Presently a Dissenter broke out, and said, "You are deceiving the people, and setting them to lean on a broken reed, by telling them that another man's obedience and blood would atone for their sins." I asked him how he could stand before that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, if there were no merit in the blood of Christ to atone for his sins? He said, "Man hath such noble faculties, that, if he improve them, he will thereby qualify himself for heaven; but you degrade man's nature in your preaching, and set him on a level with the brute beasts." I said, "Did I so?" He replied, "Yes, you did; for I heard you

myself." I replied, "Then, sir, you heard me preach false doctrine; for if I set a natural man upon a level with the beasts, I set him greatly out of his place. I believe he is far worse; for he has not only all the faculties of the beast, which are lust and earthly-mindedness, but the nature of the devil, wrath, pride, malice, and ambition. He is therefore three degrees worse than a beast, till he is created anew in Christ Jesus; so that, if I ranked him with the beasts, I set him above his place." Then he burst out into anger; but I said, "Sir, make use of that reason you speak of, and let me see you save yourself from anger." At which he was ready to strike me; and went away, leaving me, as he said, "in my stupid condition."

When I got about ten miles farther into the country, another Dissenter came into the house, where I was at prayer with a poor man. When I had done, I exhorted him not to rest, till he was sure that the Lord Jesus had loved him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood. At which words the Dissenter spoke out, saying, "I hate to hear people talk of being assured of any such thing, or of perfection in this world." I replied, "Is the Lord of life able to do what He came from heaven to do?" He said, "What is that?" I answered, "To destroy the works of the devil, to make an end of sin, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness." He said, "Shall you make me believe that any man can live without committing sin?" I answered, "I cannot tell whether I can make you believe it or not; but this I can tell you, by the authority of God's word, that if you are not saved from your sins here, you must be damned." "Well," he said, "I care not what you say; for no man can live without com-

mitting sin one day." I replied, "By your talk, it is as necessary for man to commit sin as to eat; for you say he cannot live without it. Now, doth it keep his body or soul alive? Or do you believe, that all mankind are to live in sin, and die without perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and so be damned without hope or help?" He answered, "No: God forbid!" Then I said, "You must believe there is a purgatory, to cleanse the soul in after death. Sir, you and the devil speak one language; for he said to our mother Eve, 'Did God say, In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall die? Ye shall not die.' God saith, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die;' but you say, 'The souls of all must continue in sin, and yet they shall not die!'" He said, "You shock me: if things be as you say, what will become of the greatest part of mankind?" I replied, "Our Lord's word is, 'What is that to thee? follow thou Me.'" He said, "I cannot but acknowledge, you have the Scripture on your side; but if you are right, we are sadly wrong. I never did hear one of you in my life; for our minister has warned us not to hear you; but I am determined to hear you this night." So he did, and thanked me kindly when I had done.

At my return home I was told, that they were going to press men for His Majesty's service, and that several of the ale-house keepers and clergymen had agreed to press me for one; and I was advised not to preach for a season, by several of my neighbours: but I told them that I durst not leave off preaching for anything that man could do unto me. They replied, "You should consider that you have a wife and children, and that your wife is now big with child: and if you be taken from them, what can the poor woman do, or how must she provide for her

children?" I said, "Let God look to that: if wicked men be suffered to take away my life, for calling sinners to the blood of Jesus, the Lord, whose servant I am, will be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless: and were I assured, I should be banished or put to death for preaching, and my wife and children beg their bread bare-foot, I durst not leave off; for the words of our Lord pursue me, 'He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, or his own life, more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that would save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose his life for My sake shall save it.' Therefore, pray for me; but do not tempt me to sin against my own soul."

A few days after, I went to Pudsey; but when I got there, the people of the house durst not let me preach. They told me, the constables had orders to press me; and desired me not to alight, but go back directly. I rode down to a public-house where the constable and some others had met together, and talked with them; and I told the constable, the people had said he had orders to press me; but he said, "I will not; for you do not appear to be a vagrant, and my warrant runs for none but vagrants." Many of the people followed me into the lane; and I sat on horseback, exhorting them to keep close to God by prayer; and the Lord would build the walls of Jerusalem in these troublesome times.

Soon after I went to preach at Leeds. When I got there, I was told that two constables had orders to press me, if I preached that night. I said, "If the people will venture to hear, I dare not but preach;" and immediately I went to the place, where was a large congregation gathered together, to whom I preached; and a blessed season it was.

The two constables gave great heed to what was spoken, and never offered to disturb me or any one of the people, but went away like men that feared God.

I still kept hewing stone in the day-time, and preaching every night. One day as I was at work, the same Dissenting minister that had stopped me one morning came to me, and began to ask me many questions. He seemed offended with my answers, and said he would have none of my *ifs* and *buts*. I answered, "Sir, they are none of mine; they are the words of the Lord Jesus: and who is he that dares put asunder what the Lord hath joined together?" Then he replied, "Do you think God would cut you off, if you were to commit as great a sin as ever you committed in all your life?" I said, "I believe I should thereby cut myself off from God: for the prophet saith, 'Your sins have separated between you and your God;' and God saith, 'My people have committed two evils: for they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living water, and have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.' Now, sir, God would not have said, 'They have forsaken Me,' if they had never been acquainted with Him; and I believe that one of the cisterns which they hewed to themselves was the opinion you have in your head, that sin will not separate the soul from God." He said, "You do not understand the nature of God's decree; for God doth not look upon sin in the elect: He did not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see sin in Israel." I said, "No, sir, He did not, while Jacob was upright, and God was his glory: at that time, God rejoiced over him, to do him good, with His whole heart, and His whole soul: but when he committed whoredom

with the daughters of Moab, and began to bow to their idols, then God's anger was kindled against Israel; and He cut off twenty-four thousand of them in His wrath; even the very people whom Balaam had pronounced blessed."

Then his brother-in-law, who was by him, began to curse and swear, and lifted up his stick, saying, he could find in his heart to knock me down, and called me a d——d dog; and said, "Canst thou have the impudence to talk so to a minister? Thou deservest thy brains beaten out." I said, "Sir, here is an evidence of what I said; for you can be angry with me for preaching righteousness by Jesus Christ; but you do not reprove this man for blaspheming the holy name of God." Then they went away, and left me to my work.

A little after, as I was at work, a man came to me, and said, he had called at a public house for a pint of ale, a little way from Birstal; and he heard the landlord offer to lay five pounds with some that were drinking, that John Nelson would be sent for a soldier before ten days were past. I replied, "The will of the Lord be done: if God permit it to be so, this also shall turn to the furtherance of the Gospel." He said, "I would have you to take care; for evil is determined against you." I answered, "I am not my own, but the Lord's: he that lays hands on me will burn his own fingers; and God will deliver me after He hath tried me."

Soon after, as I was at my work at another place, three gentlemen came to me, and one of them began to speak strongly against perfection. I gave him no answer. Then another began to talk about building, and said, "Hewing of stone is a fine art." I replied, "Sir, it was a fine art once, when there

were eighty thousand men together, so skilled in the art, that the stones were perfectly fitted for the places they were to have in the temple before they were brought off the mountain; so that when they came to Jerusalem there was not one stroke to strike at them, nor the sound of a tool heard in the building. Sir, you will allow those men to be workmen that needed not to be ashamed; for their work was perfect before it came to Jerusalem." The gentlemen said, "You are right, you are right. I will never speak against holiness being perfected in this world again: for certainly that house of God, at Jerusalem, was a type of the house eternal in the heavens; and every stone of that must be fitted perfectly for its place in this world, or it must not be admitted into that New Jerusalem." He added, "I thank you, and wish that all our preachers may so square their work after the rule of God's word, that they may not be ashamed when they come to give up their accounts to Him who is Lord of the work."

Wherever I went to preach, for ten days together, I was told that the constables had orders to press me. My answer was, "The will of the Lord be done; for the fierceness of man shall turn to His praise."

On Friday, as I was hewing stone, it was in my mind, that trouble was near at hand; but the words of Isaiah were a stay to me: "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" And again it came to me, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee

with the right hand of My righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish."

At night I was met, as I was going to Adwalton, by one who told me that the parson and alehouse-keepers had agreed to press me that night, and to send me away the next morning; for the commissioners were to sit at Halifax, and they would dispatch me before I could get any one to appear in my behalf. And he said, "I would have you turn back; for there is one alehouse-keeper that swears he will press you, if his arm rots from his shoulder." I answered, "I cannot fear; for God is on my side, and His word hath added strength to my soul this day: and if I fall into the hands of wicked men, God shall be glorified thereby; and when He hath proved me in the furnace, He will bring me forth as gold."

Accordingly, I went to Adwalton, and expounded, at John Booth's, to a well-behaved congregation. When I had done, Joseph Gibson, the constable's deputy, (an alehouse-keeper, who found his craft was in danger,) pressed me for a soldier. I asked him, by whose order: he said, several of the inhabitants of the town, who did not like so much preaching: and, by his own talk, it appeared they were those of his own craft, and the clergyman, who had agreed together.

He caused me to go to the White Hart, whither Mr. Charlesworth, and Mr. Holmes of Sykehouse, and several more, went with us, and Mr. Charlesworth offered £500 bail for me till the next day; but no bail was to be taken for a Methodist (so called). He protested I should go to his house. I made no resistance, but went, and several of our

people with us ; and we sang a hymn, and prayed together, and so parted.

Next morning several people came to see me before we went from Adwalton. Here I was kept ten hours before the warrant came into his house. When the constable came, he said, if he had been there, he would have prevented what Gibson had done.

Between eight and nine I went to Birstal, to my house ; and, after I had changed my clothes, we set out for Halifax. When I was brought before the commissioners, they smiled one at another as soon as they saw me. They bade the door-keepers not to let any man come in ; but Mr. Thomas Brooks had got in with me ; and they said, "That is one of his converts." They then called Joseph Gibson, and asked, "How many men have you brought?" He said, "One." "Well, and what have you against him?" "Why, gentlemen," said he, "I have nothing to say against him, but he preaches to the people ; and some of our townsmen don't like so much preaching." They broke out in laughter ; and one of them swore I was fit to go for a soldier, for there I might have preaching enough. I said to him, "Sir, you ought not to swear." "Well," said they to me, "you have no license to preach, and you shall go for a soldier." I answered, "Sir, I have surely as much right to preach, as you have to swear." He said to the captain, "Captain, is he fit for you?" "Yes," he answered. "Then take him away."

But I said, "Here are several of my honest neighbours : you ought to give me the liberty of another man, and hear what they say of me, whether I am such a one as the warrant mentions, or not." They answered, "Here is your minister," (one of the

commissioners,) "and he has told us of your character, and we will hear no more." So I found I was condemned before the commissioners saw me.

Then Mr. Brooks laid the petitions before them, sent me by neighbouring gentlemen, which testified I had done no evil, but had behaved myself well in my neighbourhood, and had always maintained my family very well; and they desired them to set me at liberty. And Mr. Brooks said, "Gentlemen, you see he is not such a man as is mentioned in the warrant." But they made him hold his peace, and said, "You are one of his pupils, and ought to go with him." He answered, "Why do you not send me then? for you have as much right to send me as him."

Then our minister spoke and said, "Young Brooks lives with a woman of the worst character in our town." When I heard him speak against his neighbour such notorious falsehoods as these, I thought it would be to no purpose for Mr. Brooks to say any more; so I desired him to be silent. Then they read the papers sent on my behalf; and one of the company asked, if he must put them on the fire. But the answer to him by several was, "No; for if they be called for, they will make against us."

"So," said I, "gentlemen, I see there is neither law nor justice for a man that is called a Methodist; but all is lawful that is done against me. I pray God forgive you; for you know not what you do." They answered, "Surely your minister must be a better judge of you than any other man; and he has told us enough of you and your preaching." "Well," said I, "Mr. C[oleby], what do you know of me that is evil? Whom have I defrauded? Or where have I contracted a debt that I cannot pay?" He said,

"You have no visible way of getting your living." I answered, "I am as able to get my living with my hands as any man of my trade in England is, and you know it; and have I not been at work yesterday, and all the week before?" But they bade the captain take me away: so he came, and said, "We will take you off preaching soon." I answered, "You must first ask my Master's leave." But he said, "We will make you give over." I replied, "It is out of your power." Then he thrust me into a corner of the room, and said, "You shall have company presently."

Afterwards several were brought to the commissioners, and three condemned to go with me, and four or five acquitted. But all had their neighbours to speak for them except me; for what need was there of any other witness?

Glory be to God on high! He kept my soul all this time in perfect peace; and I could say to Him, from my heart,—

"Whilst Thou, O my God, art nigh,
My soul disdains to fear;
Sin and Satan I defy,
Still impotently near:
Earth and hell their wars may wage,
Calm I mark their vain design,
Smile to see them idly rage
Against a child of Thine."

Then the captain read the articles to us that were condemned, and said, "You hear, your doom is death if you disobey us." I answered, "I do not fear the man that can kill me, any more than I do him who can cut down a dog-standard: for I know my life is hid with Christ in God; and He will judge between you and me one day: but I beseech Him

not to lay this sin to your charge." And to Mr. C[oleby] I said, "Sir, I pray God forgive you; for you have given me such a character as not another man in England will, that knows me."

I was greatly surprised to see men sit on the judgment-seat, and drink and swear as they did; and a man that had a commission from God to reprove all that do such things could hear and see, and yet never speak in God's cause. It made me cry out to the Lord, "Take the matter in Thy hand, O God! for righteousness is fallen in the streets, and iniquity bears rule." But I could not hear them swear but must speak to them, although they mocked at my reproof.

Then we were guarded to Halifax; but the keeper would not let us come into his jail. We were taken to the officer's quarters, and kept till six at night, where John Rhodes and Thomas Charlesworth, of Little Gomersal, came to see me, and cared for my soul, as if they had been my mother's sons. O my God, remember them for good, and give them and their houses, and all that wish well to our Sion, to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people!

At six we set out for Bradford, and many of the inhabitants prayed for me, and wept to see me in the hands of unrighteous and cruel men. But I said, "Fear not: God hath His way in the whirlwind; and He will plead my cause. Only pray for me, that my faith fail not."

When we were about half way between Halifax and Bradford, one of the soldiers said to me, "Sir, I am sorry for you; for the captain is ordered by the commissioners to put you in the dungeon. But I will speak to him, and if he will let me have the care of you, you shall lie with me; for the dungeon

is as loathsome a place as ever I saw." I thanked him for his offer. But when we got to Bradford, we were drawn up in the street where the cross stood, and the captain went and fetched the people of the dungeon, and said, "Take this man, and put him into the dungeon; and take this other along with you"—(a poor harmless man, all the clothes upon whose back were not worth one shilling: neither did they lay anything to his charge, when he was ordered for a soldier). But when we came to the dungeon-door, the soldier who spoke to me by the way went to the captain, and said, "Sir, if you will give me charge over Mr. Nelson, my life for his, he shall be forthcoming in the morning." But the captain threatened to break his head if he spoke about me any more.

The captain came to us before I went down; and I asked him, "Sir, what have I done, that I must go to the dungeon? If you are afraid of me, that I should run away, set a guard over me in a room, and I will pay them." He answered, "My order is to put you in the dungeon." So I see my Lord's word is fulfilled, "The servant is not above his Master." For those who were accused of thieving, and great evils which they had done in the neighbourhood, must eat and drink, and lie on feather-beds; but I only desired a little water, and it was refused me by the captain, although I had had nothing all the day, except a little tea in the morning. But my Master never sends His servants a warfare at their own charge: He gives strength according to their day. For, when I came into the dungeon, that stunk worse than a hog-stye by reason of the blood and filth which sink from the butchers who kill over it, my soul was so filled

with the love of God, that it was a paradise to me.

Then could I cry out, "O the glorious liberty of the sons of God!" And I fell down on my knees, and gave God thanks, that He counted me worthy to be put into a dungeon for the truth's sake; and prayed that my enemies might be saved from the wrath to come, I think with as much desire as I could feel for my mother's own children. I wished they were as happy in their own houses, as I was in the dungeon.

About ten, several of the people came to the dungeon-door, and brought me some candles, and put me some meat and water in through the hole of the door. When I had eaten and drunk, I gave God thanks; and we sang hymns almost all night, they without, and I within.

The same night, a man that lives in Bradford came to the dungeon, and, though he was an enemy to the Methodists, when he smelt the ill savour of the place, he said, "Humanity moves me." He went away directly, and about eleven came again, and said, "I will assure you I am not in your way of thinking; but for all that, I have been with your captain, and offered ten pounds bail for you, and myself as prisoner, if he would let you lie in a bed; but all in vain, for I can get nothing of him but bad words. If the justice were in town, I would have gone to him, and would soon have fetched you out. But since it is as it is, I pray God plead your cause." O my God, let not him that would give a cup of cold water to Thy servants lose his reward; but do Thou bless him, and bless Thy people! And I beseech Thee to have mercy upon our enemies, and let not Thy heavy judgments fall upon them; but be Thou

glorified in their conversion, not in their destruction!

The poor man that was with me might have starved, if my friends had not brought him meat; for when our guard had locked us up, they went to their lodging, and took no more thought of us that night. Here we had not so much as a stone to sit on.

When the man and I were laid down on a little foul straw, "Pray you, sir," said he, "are all these your kinsfolk, that they love you so well? I think they are the most loving people that ever I saw in my life." I answered, "By this you may know that they are Jesus Christ's disciples; for this is the mark He Himself has given, whereby all men might know His disciples from the unbelieving world."

At four in the morning, my wife and several more came to the dungeon, and spoke to me through the hole of the door; and I said, "Jeremiah's lot is fallen upon me." Then it came to my remembrance that, when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old, I often thought, if God should make me like Jeremiah, to stand and speak His words to the people in the streets, as he did, I should not mind who cast dirt at me. And now I am, in some measure, treated as he was, for persuading men to flee from the wrath to come.

My wife said, "Fear not: the cause is God's for which you are here, and He will plead it Himself. Therefore be not concerned about me and the children; for He that feeds the young ravens will be mindful of us; He will give you strength for your day; and after we have suffered awhile, He will perfect that which is lacking in our souls, and then bring us 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.'"

So they all said that were with her at the door. I was greatly refreshed at finding my wife so strong in the faith, when she was like to be left with two children, and big with another at the same time; and said, "I cannot fear either man or devil, so long as I find the love of God as I do now; for He has cheered my heart as with sweet wine, ever since He suffered me to be cast into prison. O that I may be faithful unto death, and I shall receive the crown of life! For not one word of Jesus shall fall to the ground, till all be accomplished."

About five in the morning, they took me out, and we were guarded to Leeds, and stood in the street till ten. Hundreds flocked to see me. Some said, "It is a shame to send a man for a soldier for speaking the truth: for many of our neighbours that follow the Methodists, and were as wicked before as any people in the town, are now like new creatures; for we do not hear an ill word come out of their mouths." Others cried, "I wish they were all hanged out of the way; for they make people go mad; and we cannot get drunk, or swear, but every fool must correct us, as if we were to be taught by them. But I hope they will now be brought to nought; for that is one of the worst of them."

As I was standing, a jolly, well-dressed woman came up to me, and put her face almost to mine, and said, "Now, Nelson, where is thy God? Thou saidst at Shent's door, as thou wast preaching, thou wast no more afraid of His promise failing, than thou wast of dropping through the heart of the earth." I replied, "Look in the seventh chapter of Micah, and the 8th and 10th verses."

Just as the church began, I was guarded to the jail, and the others to the ale-house. The jail-

keeper here was very civil; for he let my friends come in several times to see me. I thought of the Pilgrim's Progress: for hundreds of people in the street stood and looked at me through the iron grate, and were ready to fight about me. Several would have given bail for me, if they would let me out; but I was told that one hundred pounds were refused, which were offered by a stranger for me. I am too notorious a criminal to be allowed such favours; for Christianity is a crime which the world can never forgive.

At night, I believe a hundred of our friends were with me in the jail together. We sang a hymn and prayed. I gave an exhortation, and we parted. But Mr. H—— was not willing that I should lie on dirty straw, and therefore sent me a bed. I find the time is not yet come for me to be hated of all men for the sake of Christ. I pray God to give me strength for that day. Glory be to His holy name, hitherto His grace is sufficient for me, and I hang upon His promise for strength in my next trials.

At five on Monday morning I was let out of jail, and we marched off for York directly. Many of our friends went with us out of the town near three miles; but when I came to take my leave, they mourned as one that had lost his first-born. I spoke comfortable words to them, and bade them "stand fast, in nothing terrified by their adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. So the peace of God be with you all!" We came to York by three, and were brought before several of the officers, at the Black Swan, in Coney-street, who seemed to rejoice as men that had taken great spoil, and saluted me with many a grievous oath. It brought something

to my mind, which I had spoken in the fields to the Lord, when He had broken a great cloud that was on my soul, through my refusing to preach when many had desired me, and I had time, but consulted with flesh and blood, and, Jonah-like, fled from the presence of the Lord, down into a valley near the side of a wood, where God laid His hand on me, and brought my soul into such distress that I threw myself on the ground and wished for death; seeing it more agreeable to flesh and blood to be a shepherd's dog, than a preacher of the Gospel; for his hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. But at the remembrance of the prophets, and the apostles, and Christ Himself, what contradictions and tribulations they all met with, the cloud broke, and my soul was so refreshed with the love of God, that I cried out, "My Lord and my God! Now Thou hast given me strength, forsake me not; and if Thou send me to hell to preach to devils, I am ready to go."

When I was before these officers, and heard such language, I thought hell could not be much worse than the company I was in. I asked them, "Do you believe that there is a God, and that he is a God of truth?" They said, "We do." I answered, "I cannot believe you, I tell you plainly." "Why so?" I replied, "I cannot think that any man of common understanding, who believes that God is true, dares take His name in vain; much less do you believe that God can hear you when you pray to Him to damn your souls. Now, suppose God should grant you the damnation you pray for, what miserable wretches would you be! Do you know that you must one day appear before that God who will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain?"

As I reasoned with them about a future state, they seemed to shrink as if I had thrown fire at them; but they soon put away the conviction, and said, "You must not preach here; for you are delivered to us for a soldier, and must not talk so to us who are officers." I answered, "There is but one way to prevent me." They asked, "What is that?" I replied, "It is to swear no more in my hearing."

Then we were guarded through the city; but it was as if hell were moved from beneath to meet me at my coming. The streets and windows were filled with people, who shouted and huzzaed, as if I had been one that had laid waste the nation. But the Lord made my brow like brass, so that I could look on them as grasshoppers, and pass through the city as if there had been none in it but God and myself. O that I may never offend my gracious God, or provoke Him to take His lovingkindness from me! Then, though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Even now I find His word fulfilled, where He saith, "I will deliver thee from sudden fear and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." Verily, Thou art a God of truth! O be merciful to this great city, whose streets ring with curses, and turn upon them a pure language, that their souls may be saved, and the enemy disappointed of his hope!

I was brought to the guard-house, and the officers cast lots for me, and it was Captain S——'s lot to have me. Then they offered me money, but I refused to take it; and they bade the serjeant hand-cuff me, and send me to prison. I was guarded thither by a file of musqueteers, but not hand-cuffed, and kept two nights and part of three days; during which time, I was beset with such cursers and swearers as

could hardly be matched out of hell. So I had work enough both day and night to reprove them. I found they could not stand my words, but the most hardened among them shrunk, and wished they could leave it off, and never swear more.

Several of the townspeople came and asked me of the doctrine that the Methodists preached, "which makes their names," said they, "to be loathed by all sects and parties in the nation." My answer was, "The same doctrine it is, which made Jews and Gentiles conspire against Jesus Christ, who first preached it; and whoever he be that bears the testimony, he must meet with the same treatment. Our Lord has said, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for My sake;' and again, 'If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.' What! do you think Christ would be found a liar, and all His apostles, who tell us of the things that are done in this our day? Nay, verily, heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one word of Christ's shall fall to the ground."

When I had opened the Scriptures, and told them the fundamental points of our doctrine, they said one to another, "This people is not what the world represents them; for if this be their doctrine, there is not a man in England can contradict them." They offered me strong drink; but I told them I did not choose it. They wished me out of my enemies' hands, and left me to my company of drunkards and swearers.

I may indeed say, I have fought with beasts at York; for so these men live. Yet my speaking to them was not in vain; for they bridled their tongues in my presence, after the first twenty-four hours. When they spake any blasphemous words, if I did but turn and look them in the face, they looked like criminals before the magistrate.

The next morning, as I lay on the boards to rest me, I fell asleep, and I dreamed of Daniel in the lions' den. I was awakened by one crying, "Nelson, Nelson!" and I started up, saying, "Who wants me?" That instant three women came to the door, and brought me some food. They were entire strangers to me, and I to them; "but Thou, Lord, carest for me."

On Tuesday night, my wife and sister Mitchell came to see me, and found me lying on the boards. I said, "Behold the fruits of the Gospel! Now you see the word of God is fulfilled: 'They lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and he that turneth from evil maketh himself a prey.' But God looks down from heaven, and will plead our cause: fear not."—"No," answered they, "we do not fear; for our God is as able to deliver now, as He was seventeen hundred years ago." So they took their leave of me that night, wishing me a good repose on my wooden bed; where, thanks be to God, I slept as well as if I had been on a bed of down.

Next morning they brought me something to eat, and bade me be strong in the Lord, and not fear them that can kill the body only. My heart rejoiced to see them so steadfast in the faith.

This day a court-martial was held, and I was guarded to it by a file of musqueteers, with their bayonets fixed. When I came before the court, they asked, "What is this man's crime?" The answer was, "This is the Methodist preacher, and he refuses to take money." Then they turned to me, and said, "Sir, you need not find fault with us, for we must obey our orders, which are to make you act as a soldier; for you are delivered to us: and if you have not justice done you, we cannot help it."

My answer was, "I shall not fight; for I cannot bow my knee before the Lord to pray for a man, and get up and kill him when I have done. I know God both hears me speak and sees me act; and I should expect the lot of a hypocrite, if my actions contradict my prayers." "Well, don't stand preaching to us," said they; "for we must make you obey us. Serjeant, give him some money." He offered me two shillings, but I refused to take them. They threatened me sore; but I could not fear them at all. "Well," said they, "if you run away, you are as liable to suffer as if you had taken our money." I answered, "If I cannot be discharged lawfully, I shall not run away: if I do, punish me as you please." Then they ordered the serjeant to go to quarters with me. He took me to the Wild Man, in Peter-gate; where the people behaved well to me, though they had eight more quartered upon them. They said, "It is a pity you should come among such a wicked crew as these we have; for there are but few like them in the world." They ordered me a room and a bed to myself. Blessed be God, who gives me favour in the sight of the Egyptians! These people were professed Papists, who, I might imagine, would show no more mercy to a man that preaches salvation by faith, than they would do to a mad dog. Yet I see it is not the man that makes the Christian, but the mind which was in Christ; and whosoever hath this mind in him, he is a Christian, let the world call him what it will.

I came to Margaret Townshend's, and met with my wife and sister Mitchell, who rejoiced to see my feet once more out of the prison. We sang praises to God for His great mercies to me at this time, and passed the afternoon in encouraging each other.

Next morning, I sent them out of town, and went, as I was ordered, to parade at the Blue Boar, in Castle-gate; where the officers ordered Corporal W—— to fetch me a gun and other warlike instruments. The corporal seemed to shudder at the task, but was forced to obey; and when he brought them and was girding them about me, he trembled as if he had the palsy.

I asked, "Why do you gird me with these warlike habiliments? for I am a man averse to war, and shall not fight, but under the Prince of Peace, the Captain of my salvation; and the weapons He gives me are not carnal like these." "Well," said they, "but you must bear these, till you can get your discharge." "As you put them on me," I answered, "I will bear them as a cross, and use them as far as I can, without defiling my conscience; but that I will not do for any man on earth."

The officers bade them march us off to Hepworth-Moor, to learn the exercise of a soldier; but Corporal W—— seemed as tender to me as if he had been my own father, and carried the gun for me to the field. And when he came to teach me their exercise, his heart seemed to fail him, and he bade me lay down the gun, and we fell into discourse. I found he had the fear of God before his eyes, and the Lord had shown him the light of His countenance. But he was as a sparrow alone on the house-top: none cared for his conversation; but they all despised him, because he would not get drunk and swear as they did. O my God, remember him for good always, I beseech Thee!

Next day I was ordered to the field, and others must teach me the warlike exercise, who also behaved civilly to me. I had more to see me than all

the rest; and it caused the truth to break out the more, and removed prejudice from many. I found the people at York looked upon one that is called a Methodist as one who had the plague, and infects all whom he comes near; and they blessed God that none had come to preach there.

But if I was bound, the word of God was not bound; for if any blasphemed, I reprov'd them, whether rich or poor, and fell into many disputes with them: and God gave me words, such as they could not resist. My discourses had such an effect on them, that they said, they wished Mr. Wesley would come and preach there. I gave them several of our little books. So, by hearing and reading, they found out the doctrine to be only the plain word of God. And now several attended my coming to the field; not to see me, as before, but to ask questions, and to know of "the new doctrine," as some were pleased to call it. Surely, by all these things shall the Gospel be spread. The Lord is in the tempest, and it shall turn to His glory. Satan doth but whet a knife to cut his own throat.

One day, as I was talking to the people, a man came and feigned himself to be concerned about his soul. As he was coming, it was impressed upon my mind that he was a deceiver. As soon as he approached, I said, "You are a wicked man, and Satan hath sent you with a lie in your mouth; but God will not be mocked." He went away as one condemned. Before he had gone one hundred yards, he fell down, and broke a limb, and dislocated his shoulder. Then he roared like a bear, saying, "It is a just judgment from God on me,"—and desired me to pray for him.

On Sunday, the 13th, I went to Coney-street.

church, and the Lord manifested Himself to me in great love at the sacrament. At night, Hannah Scholefield and I, with our brother Houghton from Manchester, and two or three more, went out into the fields, thinking to retire ; but some had seen us, and told others that we were going to sing hymns. In a few minutes we had near a hundred to keep us company. We sang two hymns, and I gave them an exhortation. They received my word with meekness, and wished to hear me again.

We went a mile another way ; but there were people walking there also, who, knowing me, flocked to us, and desired to hear what sort of doctrine it was which caused all men to hate us. I said, "It is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which made all men hate Him ; and ye are sensible our great Shepherd said, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for My sake.' " But they said, "This is a Christian land, and it is not so now." "Well," said I, "then you must say the Gospel is not an everlasting Gospel, or you declare us blessed, and almost all the people in England cursed." They said, "What, do you point the blessings to you, and the curse to all the rest ? We think it is the other way." "Then," said I, "you do not think as Christ speaks ; for He said, 'Blessed are ye when all men speak evil of you, and hate you for My sake, and the Gospel's : rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for so they did to the prophets of old. But woe unto you when all men speak well of you ; for so they spake of the false prophets.' " Upon this they were silent, but wished they could hear me themselves, as they then should be better able to judge. By this time a great company were come together, desiring to hear me ; and God gave me to speak plainly, and to their hearts. When I

had done, several of them said they would go ten miles to hear such another discourse. The prejudice seemed taken out of their minds at a stroke; and they cried, "This is the doctrine which ought to be preached, let men say what they will against it."

As we came back, one of our company said, "I wonder the devil cannot perceive, that this striving to suppress the Gospel is like striving to quench the fire by casting oil upon it. As God spake, so it is, I see, this day. His servants are like brands of fire cast into dry stubble. Surely God will be glorified in your captivity: only let us watch and pray, that the enemy get no advantage over us."

The day following I went as before to exercise, when many came to talk with me, some to dispute, and some who earnestly desired to be saved. Among the disputers was a clergyman. I knew him; for I had seen him in his gown three days before. When several who appeared as gentlemen disputed hotly against all the power of religion, I showed them from the articles, homilies, and prayers of our own Church, that those who speak as they did, were no members of the Church of England; for to be a real member of Christ's church, is to feel Christ in us,—to know that He died for His church, and that by His death we are delivered from death eternal,—to find that Spirit which raised Him from the dead, raising us from the death of sin, that our bodies may be the undefiled temples of the living God, a holy habitation of God, through His Spirit dwelling in us. For as many as have the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; and if any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of His. "Nay, if you know not," I added, "that Christ is in you, you are now in a state of reprobation." "So," said they, "you have

condemned us all at a stroke." I answered, "I have condemned no man; for I have not spoken my own, but the words of God; as I appeal to your consciences, you that have ever read the Scriptures."

When they were put to silence, the minister began to explain the Spirit of God out of the Word, as what could not be felt or perceived at all, neither was it necessary, now we had the Scriptures to go by. I said, "It is highly necessary, if the Scriptures be true; for they tell me, if I have not the Spirit of Christ, I am none of His; and if I am not His, I must belong to the devil, for they two share the world between them. Besides, if there be no such thing as receiving the Holy Spirit now-a-days, as you say, then he who repeats the prayers of the Church offers to God the sacrifice of fools." Here he stormed at me, and called me an enthusiast, and said, "To talk of the Spirit is all a delusion." "Hold, sir," I replied, "or I shall expose you before the people, which I did not design to do. How could you affirm, before God and the congregation, that you were inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon you the office of a deacon; and now testify there is no such thing as being moved by the Holy Spirit?" He said, "Did I say so?" "Yes, sir," I answered, "you did, when you received holy orders." He turned pale, spake not ten words more, but went away. I have met him several times since, and he speaks kindly to me.

I had some every day to dispute with me, and every night some to converse with me, who wanted to know the way to Zion. The people now cried out, "When will Mr. Wesley come? for here are thousands in this town that would gladly hear him." Indeed I found a great desire in them to know the

way of salvation; yea, and they seemed willing to be saved in God's own way; that is, *from* their sins, not *in* them. Surely the Lord will be mindful of them, and give them teachers after His own heart!

The second Sunday I went to church, and my heart was comforted again by the love of God in the sacrament. God, I find, will meet with us in His own ways. O may we never forsake them!

This week several of the brethren came to see me, and we were comforted together. Our brother Ash brought me some little books, which I gave to the people who came to see me; so that, by my speaking and their reading, many began to be alarmed, and sent for me to their houses to inquire, "How can these things be, which you affirm? For if these things are as you say, and Mr. Wesley has here written, then we are not Christians." I told them, "I will prove those things to be true, both from our own Church and the written word of God; and if you find you have not these inward marks of faith, such as peace, joy, love, and the witness of the Spirit, you are no Christians yet. But that is no reason why you should not become such: for Christ has commanded repentance and remission of sins to be preached to every soul in His name; and He doth actually pardon and absolve all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel. Therefore seek, and you shall find; for the truth of God binds Him to give to every one that asketh."

The people attended my going into the field all this week; and when I went along the streets, they came out of their houses to stare at me, as if I had been a monster. I have read that they would not suffer any to buy or sell in the city, unless they had the mark of the beast; but here, without his

mark, we cannot so much as pass the streets. O my God, why is Thy servant as a speckled bird in this which is called a Christian country!—called after Thy most sacred name; which whosoever nameth must depart from iniquity! How is the faithful city become a harlot, and Thy people taken captive by the enemy at his will! It is for Thee, Lord, to lay to Thine hand; for they have destroyed Thy law!

One day this week, after my exercise on the moor, there came a gentleman in gold lace, and a minister in disguise, and began asking me questions; which I answered according to the ability God gave me. Many flocked round about us to hear: for our dispute was long, and hot on their side. I believe we had talked half an hour before I perceived he was a minister; for I took him for a lawyer, and such an one as believed there was no God! For if I spake of the Scripture, he threw up his head, and called me a fool, and bade me hold my nonsense. I said, "That which you call nonsense, I call the highest wisdom." When I spake anything of the Spirit of God, he heaved his cane at me as if he would have struck me; but God gave me perfect ease in my soul, and words which made him start, and convinced the bystanders of the truth. He was so enraged, that he foamed at the mouth like a horse that is hard ridden.

But when I understood that he was a minister, I said, "Hold, sir; let me speak a little, by your leave. You call yourself a minister of the Church of England, do you not?" "I do." "Pray then, sir, what doctrine do you preach? For you make the word of God of none effect, and you deny all inspiration." He replied, "So I do deny all inspiration." "How dare you then pray for the

inspiration of God's Spirit, when you do not believe there is any such thing?" When he had raged awhile, he said, "I believe you have read the book of Job, and made it all your own." I answered, "I have need of patience, who have men of such principles as you to talk with, that regard not what they say to provoke one; but I thank God, you have not done it yet." He replied, "My reason for speaking so is, because you cannot be quiet with your nonsense and inspiration. And I hear you have preached several times since you came, and have filled the heads of many in this town with your new doctrine." I told him, I had not preached publicly since I came, but did not know how soon I might. Then he shook his stick, stamped, and said in anger, "If you do preach publicly, we shall take an order with you, which shall be worse than sending you for a soldier." "Let God look to that," I answered; "for by His grace I can love all men, but fear none that can kill the body only. I assure you, it is not the fear of man which shall hinder me from preaching; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." When he began to calm a little, I asked him, "Sir, suppose you had been inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel: if the outward ordination were refused you, when you believed yourself called according to the will of Christ to preach, would you forbear preaching? that is, would you obey man or God?" "I suppose," said he, "you think you have put a hard question to me." But, hard or easy, he never answered; and I cannot remember that I ever saw him since. Just as he went away, he challenged me to go into a room with him; but I said, "I have done fighting, sir."

On Saturday, several desired me to preach on

Sunday morning. I told them I should take a walk out to the moor, at half an hour after seven. Accordingly, I did so, and found thrice as many as I expected, and preached to about three hundred well-behaved people, who entreated me to preach to them again at night. I answered some of them, I did not know but I might: yet I gave no public notice; but one told another, and it spread through the city.

I went to the Minster, and heard the bishop preach, and received the blessed sacrament at his hands. At seven in the evening I went to the moor, and found an unexpected congregation; I believe six thousand people. But there was nothing prepared for me to stand on; and great part of the soldiers were there almost drunk, and began to quarrel with the people that crowded about me; so that I saw there was likely to be mischief done, and prevented it by withdrawing. If I had preached, I believe they would have behaved very quietly; for they seemed to have a great desire to hear what this doctrine was. I had not the opportunity of satisfying them at this time; but they that heard in the morning told others, and inflamed them the more with a desire to hear for themselves. Several sent for me to their houses, and others came to me: so I see God will work, and who shall hinder? Lord, open their understanding, that they may know the things which belong to their everlasting peace!

On Monday I heard that some clergymen were with the officers; and, at night, one of the officers sent for me, and said, "What, you cannot leave off preaching yet; but we must be blamed about you. But if ever you preach publicly again, you shall be severely whipped." My answer was, "I am not careful in this matter. It is better to obey God

than man ! I believe it is the will of God that I should preach : and I have not taken man to please in anything that will offend my God."

With many threats, he bade me go : but I made no promise to obey him ; neither did I intend it in this case ; for I had promised to go to Acomb, a village about a mile out of York. The next evening, accordingly, I went, and preached to almost all the inhabitants, in a field. The Lord gave me to speak His word freely, and sent it with power to their hearts : the rock was struck, and the water gushed out. All whom I saw, behaved well. Many said, " We hope you will come again ; for, let men say what they will of this people, this is the truth, and so we shall find it one day."

As I came down the street, an alderman and his wife, of York, who had been to hear me, were standing at the gate of his house, and he called me, and said, " If you please to accept of a glass of any sort of liquor which my house affords, it is at your service." I answered, " I thank you for your good-will, but I don't care to drink." Several others offered me drink, but I took none. They prayed me to come once a week, as long as I stayed in York. Lord, be mindful of this people, I beseech Thee ; and send them those who will preach righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ ! And O that they may be found with the wedding-garment on in that day when every covering which is not of Thy Spirit will be found as filthy rags before Thy pure eyes !

All that week I had company as much as I could tell what to do with. Several desired me to preach on Sunday morning. I did not promise, but went to discourse with about a score, at seven, on the moor. Others had a suspicion of my being there ;

and I believe two hundred flocked round me, as soon as they saw me walking, and begged me to preach to them. I told them I stood in jeopardy if I did; but they answered, "We are more in danger than you, for our souls are in danger;" on which it came into my mind that I had freely received, and I ought freely to give. I therefore preached to them; and God was with us of a truth, and the hearts of the people were opened to receive the word in love.

Thence I went to sister Townshend's, where I found my own brother, and brother Mitchell, who came to see me; and we were comforted together. Our time was short; for I had but half an hour before I had to answer for what I had done. Somebody had told the ensign that I had been preaching: so he sent for me, and said, "D—n your blood, sir, have you been preaching this morning?" I told him I had; on which he swore he would have no preaching nor praying in the regiment. "Then, sir," said I, "you ought to have no swearing or cursing, neither; for surely I have as much right to pray and preach, as you have to curse and swear."

He swore again that I should be damnably whipped for what I had done. I answered, "Let God look to that: the cause is His. But if you do not leave off your cursing and swearing, it will be worse with you than with me." Then he said, "Corporal, put this fellow into prison directly." The corporal said, "Sir, I must not carry a man to prison, unless I give in his crime with him." "Well," said he, "it is for disobeying orders." So I see a hundred may disobey all the orders of God, and there is no notice taken of them; nor do the common people cry out, "Hang them out of the way;" but if one of a thousand begins to reprove them for sin,

they hale him to prison, as if he had killed father or mother. But so it was from the beginning ; for a murderer was preferred before the Prince of Life.

I was put prisoner just as the church service began ; and I sent a man to tell my brother that the word of God was fulfilled,—“Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried,”—and desired their prayers, that I might be faithful unto death. As soon as I was within the prison, my heart was filled with joy unspeakable, and my mouth with praise to my gracious Redeemer. This also shall turn to the glory of God ; for several men of good report heard me this morning, and testified that I had spoken the truth ; and they would not, they said, be guilty of sending that man to prison for preaching, for all the world. This caused many to come to me, who offered me wine and strong drink. I told them I did not care for any sort of strong liquor ; but such as I had, I gave unto them,—some little books, and the word of God, which He gave me plentifully to speak to them, without respect to any man’s person.

Two nights, and near three days, I was kept prisoner at this time ; during which, my soul was as a watered garden, and I could sing praises to God all day long ; for He turned my captivity into joy, and gave me to rest as well on the boards, as if I had been on a bed of down. Now could I say, “God’s service is perfect freedom ;” and I was carried out much in prayer, that my enemies might drink of the same river of peace which my God gave so largely to me.

Now did I more plainly see the dreadful state of the unconverted than ever ; and thought, if it might be the conversion of my enemies, I could be content

that they should tread me under their feet. But God only knows how it would have been, had I been so tried ; yet thus far He hath helped me, and hath given me strength for my day. Indeed, I have found Him a God of truth, as far as I have tried Him ; and I put forth the hand of my faith, to lay hold on His strength, for what He shall next call me to.

On Tuesday I was fetched out, and brought before the major. There were several of the young officers with him, who smiled when I came into the room ; for they had been several times to see me in prison, and had sworn I should be severely whipped. But I told them, "If you do not repent and leave off that swearing, you will perish eternally : and I shall be a witness against you ; and that will be worse than your whipping me for Christ's sake."

Now they seemed to rejoice, as if their words were going to be fulfilled. The major called, "John Nelson : what were you put into prison for ?" "For warning people to flee from the wrath to come," I answered : "and, if this be a crime, I shall commit it again, unless you cut my tongue out ; for it is better to die than disobey God." "Well, but if that be all," he replied, "it is no crime ; for when you have done your duty, I do not care if you preach every night in a house, or any private place out of the town. But I would not have you make any mobs." "That," said I, "is far from my design." "Well," said he, "you may go home to your quarters : and, if I have a convenient time, I will send for you, and hear you myself ; for I wish all men were like you." Here my adversaries hung down their heads, and gave off smiling.

As I went to sister Townshend's, I heard that we were to leave York on Thursday, at four in the

morning, and march to Sunderland. I had a great desire to see my wife first; but she did not get my letter soon enough. Many of the people came, and said, "We are sorry you are going so soon from York: but, if you get your liberty, we hope both you and Mr. Wesley will come; for we have need of such plain dealing, and thousands in this city would be glad to hear. You see what a populous, wicked place it is. Pray do not forget us, but think of us when you see us not. We expected some of you two or three years ago; but you had no regard for our souls, till God brought you by force. Surely you were not sold hither, but sent for our good: therefore forget us not."

O the tenderness which this people showed, and desire for the word of God! It moved me to cry out, "Lord, have mercy on them, and let them hear Thy Gospel, and find it Thy power unto salvation! For why should Thy people perish for lack of knowledge?"

On Thursday morning we stood two hours in the streets, before we set out of town. We marched to Easingwold that day; and when we were drawn up in the street, the people perceived me to be the Methodist preacher they had read of in the newspapers. They told one another, and flocked about me, as if the soldiers had brought a monster into the town.

When we had stayed near an hour in the street, I and five more were billeted at one house, where the people were so poor they had not six seats for us to sit on, nor any beds: so we came back to the officers' quarters, and they ordered four of us to another house.

God gave me to speak plainly to them, and

several of their neighbours who came to see the Methodist. And then they said, "If this be the Methodist doctrine, we pray God we may have it preached in this town; for hundreds would be glad to hear you."

In the evening the head man of the town came in. He was a professed Papist, but was a moral, honest man, and bore a good character in his neighbourhood. He asked me many questions, and God enabled me to answer him to his satisfaction. Indeed, I never saw a man of his rank so teachable and humble: his gold lace did not make him above listening to the Gospel: he seemed a man of sound reason, as well as of a liberal education. I spoke near an hour to prove the doctrine of justification by faith, and that both from the Old and the New Testament. I showed the fruits of that justifying faith, and the necessity of every man's having it, that he may escape the damnation of hell. The word had such an effect upon him, that his eyes betrayed the tenderness of his heart; and when I ended, he said, "I think no man in his senses would dare to hinder you from instructing sinners in the way of salvation. For my own part, I shall be glad to see you at liberty; and if you get clear of these men, and come again this way, I would have you call on me."

I was amazed to find such a man among the Papists, having met with very few, either teachers or hearers, of our own Church, but what hold Popish principles ten times stronger than this man, who calls himself a Papist. When he went away, he forced two shillings into my hand, which I would have returned, telling him I received no money, and needed none; but he would not take it again, saying

he could afford it, and I might have occasion for them on my journey. O God, be merciful to him that gives a cup of cold water to Thy servants !

Next morning at two the drum beat for us to march out of the town. By eleven on Friday we got to North-Allerton, and by twelve settled in quarters. I went into the market-place, and spoke to those I found there, of the way of salvation ; I hope, not in vain. Afterwards, as I was sitting alone, there came a shopkeeper, who said, if I would go to his house, he would give me a glass of any liquor I pleased to drink. I told him I did not drink any strong liquor. " Well but," said he, " I desire your company, if you please, for half an hour." I went to his house, and drank tea with him and his family, and spake plainly to them. They received my exhortation with thankfulness, and said, " We have heard much of you, but never heard any of you before. Several of you have passed through this town, and we wondered they have never preached here. If you come again, we hope you will call and see us." I gave them a book, and returned to my quarters.

Next morning at one the drum beat for us to march, and we got to Darlington by nine. Here I was known to several, and by them made known to almost all the town. Many came to my quarters to talk with me ; and others sent for me. Whence this famine in the land ? I find the people hunger after the word, as if there were no Bibles in the nation.

We rested here on Sunday, and I had many to see me. When they heard what our doctrine was, they cried, " It is a shame to send a man for a soldier for speaking the truth : for, let all men say what they will, this is the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

In the evening, one of the officers came to me, and said, "Well, sir, why were you not at church to-day?" I answered, "I was, sir; and if you had been there, you might have seen me; for I never miss going when I have an opportunity." "Well, sir," he added, "have you preached since you came hither?" "Not publicly yet," I replied. He swore he wished I would, that he might punish me severely. "But, sir," I told him, "if you do not repent and leave off that habit of swearing, you will be worse punished than you are able to punish me." He replied, "I will make you mind your fire-lock, and leave off your preaching." "Yes, sir," I answered, "when I leave off speaking."

This was he that put me in prison at York for preaching. As Saul hunted David, so has this man hunted my soul: but, I trust, the same God that delivered David, will deliver me from cruel men. He called for one of the soldiers, from whose hat he took the cockade, and putting it in mine, swore he would make me wear it. This caused a sore temptation to arise in me, to think that an ignorant wicked man should thus torment me in the street and prison, and I was able to tie his head and heels together. I found an old man's bone in me; but the Lord lifted up a standard, when anger was coming in like a flood, else I should have wrung his neck to the ground, and set my foot upon him; which would have brought a reproach upon the Gospel, and wounded my own soul. But God is good to me; for He showed me the danger, and delivered me from it in a moment. Then I could look upon him with pity, and pray for him from the ground of my heart. I gave several books away in this town also; which we left the next morning.

I was much surprised at the good nature of the soldiers in all this march; for I believe twenty offered to carry the gun for me, or anything else I had. God, I found, supported me wonderfully in all these trials; for I could travel fifteen or twenty miles fasting, as well as those who ate and drank two or three times by the way. Surely man doth not live by bread alone; but the Lord is the strength of Israel, the Defender of all them that put their trust in Him. O God, be Thou my guide unto death!

We got to Durham by nine on Monday; but, in our way, we had a river to cross, and were obliged to wade through it. The day was very hot; so that I had sweat much, and caught cold immediately. I found myself much out of order when we got to Durham, and desired I might lie down a little. Corporal W. lay down with me, and fell asleep. At twelve I awoke suddenly, as if some man had called me, and said to the corporal, "I must go to the market-place directly, for what I know not, neither which way to go to it." "Nor I," he said; "but I will go with you, and we can inquire the way." Accordingly, we did; and just as we got thither, my brother Westall was inquiring for me among the soldiers. "Well," said Mr. W., "I never saw such a thing in my life, that you should thus awake, and come to meet your friend the minute he came to seek for you."

We were much comforted together. He told me that Mr. John Wesley would be at Durham soon after four o'clock. I gave God thanks for that news. We went to a common about a mile from the town, and there we met Mr. Wesley. My heart rejoiced to see him; and great reason have I to give God thanks that I ever saw him, who was an instrument

in God's hand of plucking me as a brand out of the fire. And I have found him God's messenger for my good ever since.

We came to the sign of the Angel, and had some conversation together. He exhorted me to watch and pray; and did not doubt but my captivity would turn to the glory of God, and the furtherance of the Gospel. At six I went to answer my call, and Mr. Wesley went into the Minster.

Afterwards I and Thomas Beard, my fellow-prisoner, met Mr. Wesley, and our brother Errington, and went with them to the inn, and stayed till nine. Mr. Wesley said, "Brother Nelson, lose no time; speak and spare not; for God hath work for you to do in every place where your lot is cast: and when you have fulfilled His good pleasure, He will break your bonds in sunder, and we shall rejoice together." When we had prayed together, we commended each other to the grace of God, and so parted in body, but not in spirit.

Next morning the drum beat at one, and we were called up in the market-place, and caused to stand till three, and then marched off for Sunderland, which we reached by nine. When we were brought up into the town, I heard several of the inhabitants say one to another, "That is the Methodist mentioned in the newspapers; for his look is not like other men's." O my God, why am I and my fellows become men that are wondered at?

While we stood, a landlord came to us, and said, "Sir, I wish you would quarter at my house; for I expect two, and shall be glad to have you for one, and whom you choose for a comrade." I chose Corporal W., and asked for a billet, as the man desired, but could not get it; yet I believe we got

the best quarters we could in Sunderland. Thus I see, if we acknowledge God in all our ways, He will direct our paths.

When I went to exercise, many came to see me, and I fell into discourse with them, but could get no hold on them; for they assented and consented to all I said, and were so full of what the world calls good manners, that all I spake was written as on the sand, though I talked with them several days. Yet some, I trust, will be mindful of their everlasting welfare.

On Saturday night I was ordered to stand sentry on the Sunday following; but I desired I might stand another day, or pay for my guard. I believe ten men offered to stand for me, but all in vain; for the ensign, who had showed hatred against me all along, was the officer of the guard that day; and he protested he would make me do it myself. I asked, "Sir, what have I done, that I cannot have the same liberty as another man?" He answered, "You love the church too well; and I will keep you from it, and make them go who do not like to go!" Keep me, O my God, from all anger, or ill-will! for this man is set to prove me. I went to the guard-house, and many came to talk with me; but I did not stand sentry till six on Monday morning. The ensign saying in the street, I should not go to church, because I loved it, drew many of the people to me; and will turn, I am persuaded, to the furtherance of the Gospel.

The week after Mr. M. came. He had heard what the ensign had done, and came to me, and asked me how I did; and said, "I am informed Mr. A. hindered you from going to church; but, I will assure you, you shall not be hindered again as long as you

are with us." I have found something of good in this man ever since I knew him. He will hear reason, and seems to make a conscience both of his words and actions. I was near an hour in his chamber, and he asked me of the principal points of our doctrine. I made them as plain to him as I could; and he heard me with great candour, and said, he had no fault at all to find with it. He told me, "The first time that ever I saw you, I saw you were no vagrant, but it would be a scandal to all who were concerned in sending or receiving such a one; for the Act of Parliament does not reach such as you. But the rest of the officers said they could not help it; for you were delivered to us as a soldier by the justices, and they are the rogues." "No, sir," I answered, "the justices are in no fault; for I was never before one of them yet." He said, "Who sent you then?" I replied, "The commissioners." "What evidence had they against you?" "The accusation against me by the constable's deputy was, 'He preaches to the people;' and he also confessed that he knew no other evil of me." "Well, but the Act of Toleration clears you from that being a crime. What, had you no man to speak for you?" "Yes, several were ready; but none were suffered to do it. Neither were the papers regarded, which my honest neighbours, and some gentlemen, sent on my behalf; for one of the commissioners was the parson of our parish, and he was the evidence against me, and they said they would hear no other."

"Nay," said Mr. M., "it is no wonder they treated you so, if the priest was concerned; for they have been at the head of all persecutions for religion which have been since the world began. I see them so wicked, that I do not mind religion at all. But

this is my religion : I believe there is one God, and that Christ His Son died for the world ; I strive to do honestly to all men ; and to do a good turn to the meanest, if I can. And I think my religion is better than theirs, who preach one thing and do another ; for I have seen so much of them, that, I assure you, I would hear you as soon as any in the land."

He said he should like to read some of our books : so I made him a present of "An Earnest Appeal," "The Character of a Methodist," and the sermon, "Awake, thou that sleepest." He has since told me, that he has read them, and likes them well.

This day he procured me a furlough to Newcastle, for seven days : and I found I did not go up without the Lord ; for my soul and those of the people were refreshed with the love of God. Several of the soldiers came to hear me preach, and gave great attention to the things which were spoken. I found great freedom to speak to the children whom God has called out of the evil world to serve Him in this place. Watch over them, O my God, for good ; and be Thou their guide unto death !

On Tuesday my time was out to go back. I preached at Painshaw, in the afternoon, to an attentive congregation, and got to Sunderland by seven at night. This week I received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, stating, that the E[arl] of S[tair] had assured Lady Huntingdon that I should be set at liberty in a few days. I said, "The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious ; for He hath taken my cause in hand, and it shall turn to His glory ; for He alone hath done the work, when all human means seems to fail." My enemies cried, "We have made his bonds strong, and none can deliver him out of our snare ; for we have put it out of the officers'

power to discharge him for any price." Lord, I beseech Thee, open their eyes, and let them see the snare which Satan hath made for their souls, and escape by speedy repentance, and faith in Thy blood.

This week I was much out of health by the surfeit I got in marching ; but found present ease by being blooded. The week following I was sent for by the captain to the store-house ; and he insisted on my going, though I was so ill. When I came there, he and three more officers came and asked me how I did : I told them ; and they said, " Here is a good coat for you, to keep you from the cold, that you may recover your health." I said, " I have coats enough, if that will do : I need none of yours." They said, they would make me wear it, and all other clothing belonging to a soldier. I answered, " You may array me as a man of war, but I shall never fight." They asked me, " What is your reason ? " My answer was, " I cannot see anything in this world worth fighting for. I want neither its riches nor honours, but the honour that cometh from God only ; I regard neither its smiles nor its frowns ; and have no business in it, but to get well out of it."

Then they ordered the serjeant to pull off my coat, and put a red one on me. When he had done it, they turned me round and rejoiced over me. I said, " You see the Scripture cannot be broken, where it saith, ' If they do this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry ? ' " " What do you mean by that ? " they asked. I answered, " The soldiers took Jesus, and stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe upon Him, and mocked Him, as you have treated me, His servant, this day, for speaking His words. He, indeed, hath the greater condemnation who delivered

me into your hands; but I pray God forgive you all." These words turned their countenances and behaviour towards me, and one of them laboured much from that time to find some way for me to be set at liberty.

During my three weeks' illness many of the orethren and sisters from Newcastle, Biddick, and Painshaw came to see me; and God was pleased at that time to give some the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, and to comfort all our hearts with His love. O may we ever keep His commandments, that we may continue in His love; even as he kept His Father's commandments, and continued in His love!

On Friday, July 27th, John Graham, of Sunderland, came to me with an open letter in his hand, and said, "Come, my friend, I have good news for thee: God hath heard the prayers of His people in thy behalf, and sent thee deliverance. Here, read this letter, which the major hath sent to the captain on thy account." It was on this wise: "I have received an order from the Earl of S[tair] to discharge John Nelson, who was pressed from Birstal, the West Riding of Yorkshire: therefore take the arms and clothing from him, which he has received, and let me know if he has had any pay since he came, and send him to me with a furlough." Accordingly I delivered all things I had belonging to them to Lieutenant M., who said he was glad that I was released, and wished me well wheresoever I went. I had a furlough given me, and set out in the afternoon with some that were come from Newcastle to see me; and got there by seven.*

* "This injured man was not set at liberty because of any acknowledged injustice or illegality in his impressment. He was

All the Society gave God thanks on my behalf, as soon as they saw me; for they had knowledge of my deliverance before I had. Next morning I went to the major's quarters about nine. When I had waited about an hour, I was ordered to come at half an hour past eleven. I did so, and waited another hour: then the major called to me, and bade me come at half an hour after two, and he would speak to me. I came again as he ordered me; and when I had stayed near an hour, one of the captains called to me, and said, "The major is gone to dine with the mayor of the town, and you will hardly see him to-night; but you will be sure to find him to-morrow morning." I told him, that would not do for me; for my business was not to be done on the Sabbath.

Near six in the evening, I saw the major going along the street, and followed him to his lodgings. He said, "I have an order from Lord S. to discharge you." He sent for the adjutant, and ordered him to bring two printed discharges with him. He came, and three more of the officers with him, and filled up the discharge. When he had done, he said, "I wish all the men in our regiment would behave as well as Mr. Nelson has done since he has been amongst us: it would be better for us and them too." Then our lieutenant said, "Indeed he has done

liberated by a substitute, who was hired to take his place, the money being, in all probability, contributed by the Methodists of London, at the instigation of Mr. Charles Wesley; who says in his Journal, under date of June 6th, 1744, 'Toward the end of my discourse, at the chapel, Mr. Erskine was sent to receive a soldier, brought by William Shent to redeem John Nelson. He immediately took him to Lord Stair, and got a discharge for John Nelson. Our brother Downes also we received out of the mouth of the lion. Our prayers return thick upon us.'—"Life of Charles Wesley," vol. i., p. 385, edit. 1841.

much good since he came among us : for we have not had one-third of the cursing and swearing in the regiment which we had before he came : and he has given me several private exhortations, and some of their books ; and I thank him for them, and for his advice, for they are good." Then the major said, " I wish I had a regiment of such men as he is in all respects, save that one, his refusing to fight : I would not care what enemy I had to meet, or where my lot was cast." " Sir, if you fear God," I said, " you have no need to fear anything else : for they that fear Him, depart from evil, and seek to do His will, and not their own ; they know, that in His hand are the issues of life and death ; therefore, they fear not him that can kill the body only, but Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. And every one that has this fear is truly wise ; but he that dare commit sin, his wisdom is the foolishness of folly ; for he is pulling destruction on his own head, and fitting himself as fuel for hell-fire. But he that is wise unto salvation is bold as a lion, and is more noble than to contend for the honour which cometh of men ; for, having bread to eat, and raiment to put on, he knows he has all this world can afford him. He pities the great ones of the earth who feed on husks, and can be content with the title of right honourable, while, by sin, they debase themselves even down to hell : but by these things the god of this world blinds their eyes, so that very few of them see the way to heaven, as it is pointed out in the word of God."

" Well," said the major, " if you be so scrupulous about fighting, what must we do ? " I answered, " It is your trade ; and if you had a better, it might be better for you." " But somebody," he replied,

"must fight." I said, "If all men lived by faith in the Son of God, wars would be at an end." "That is true," he answered: "if it were so, we should learn war no more."

"But there is one thing," said he, "I desire to know: tell me, do you make your sermons ready before you go to preach, or do you speak off-hand?" "I do not study what to say, but speak as the Spirit of God enables me." "Well," said he, "I cannot tell what you mean by the Spirit of God." "The more is the pity," I answered, "that you should have lived so long in the world, and know nothing of God yet. For we do not know God but by His own Spirit given unto us; and till we have received that Spirit, we are without God in the world: and no man can have this gift, and not know it; for thus saith the Lord Jesus, 'At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' So that, if God be true, we must know that Christ is in us, or we are none of His. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God: but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,'—he is no Christian, no more than a Turk or Pagan, unless he has the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, to raise him in this world from the death of sin."

Here one of the captains spake: "You said, one day, 'If we have not the Spirit of God, we are dead while we live.'" "Did I so?" "Yes, you did." "Then I will prove it, both from the doctrine of the Church of England, (of which I profess myself a member,) and from the word of God." God gave me to speak plainly from both for about twenty minutes; none contradicting me, but they both stood as dumb men.

Then the major said, "Here is such a discharge for you as I never gave before, but once;" and put it into my hand. I told them, "I have now delivered my own soul, and am pure from the blood of you all: for I have not spared either poor or rich, since I came among you, but have set life and death before you all, as you came in my way. I have declared unto you, that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God; and contrariwise, the blessed state of them that repent, and obey the Gospel of Christ our Saviour: and I pray God to give you all to understand the things which belong to your everlasting peace, and bless you in turning every one of you from your iniquities; then shall we meet another day to part no more." The major said, "I wish you well wherever you go: for I believe you Methodists are a well-meaning people;" and so said they all. I gave them a book, and took my leave of them.

I went to the room, and preached that night, and had several of the soldiers to hear me, who gave attention to what I said. Then I took my leave of them; but some of them wept, and desired me to pray for them, and said, "We are glad you are set at liberty, but sorry to part with you." I commended them to God, and the word of His grace, and trust they will mind the exhortation, and become soldiers of Jesus Christ.

On the 28th day of July I was set at liberty to go wheresoever I thought was most for God's glory, who has delivered me from my bonds; for He hath done the work, and to Him the glory is due. What am I that He should care for me? But He is a God that heareth prayer; and the cries of His people inclined Him to take my cause in hand.—Praise the

Lord, O my soul, who hath kept thee in all thy trials, and hath not suffered thee to faint in sore temptation!

Now I find the words true which Mr. John Wesley wrote to me at York: "Well, my brother, is the God whom you serve able to deliver you; and do you find Him faithful to His word? Is His grace still sufficient for you? I doubt it not. He will not suffer you to be weary or faint in your mind. But He had work for you to do which you knew not of, and thus His counsel was to be fulfilled. O, lose no time! Who knows how many souls God may by this means deliver into your hands? Shall not all these things be for the furtherance of the Gospel? And is not the time coming when we shall cry out together, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us?'"

On the 29th of July, 1744, the day after I was released from my captivity, I preached at the room in Newcastle; and the power of the Lord was present. Several more were converted that week, and my own soul refreshed amongst them.

The week after I set out for home; and brother Tinkler assisted me with a horse as far as Ferry-Hill, where we commended each other to the grace of God, and I set out on foot.

The day after I met brother Ash and two more near Boroughbridge, coming to meet me with my mare. We stopped, and sang praise together unto God, who had broken my bonds and preserved me in many dangers.

It was given out for me to preach at Leeds that night; and I preached in an open yard to a large company of rich and poor, who did not attend our preaching before I was sent for a soldier. Thus we

see that what the enemies of the Lord Jesus do to hinder His Gospel helps to enlarge His kingdom. So it is, that He turns the fierceness of men to His praise, and the remainder of it He restrains ; for not one in Leeds opened his mouth against me, but hundreds said they were glad to see me at liberty again.

When I got home, I found my wife and children well ; and we praised God together. But when I came to converse with the people, my soul was distressed within me ; for those that had showed me great love before I went, by their behaviour and countenance, now seemed to wish I had not come back ; for Mr. Viney, who had been with the Moravians, had got among them in my absence, and had preached to them another Gospel. They now told me they did not want the law or work-preaching any more, but that they wanted to be fed ; and that neither Mr. Wesley nor I knew how to build up souls as well as Mr. Viney did. But I found that they were built up in an unholy faith ; for they said, to tell people that they must be holy in this world was Mr. Wesley's error and mine, and we kept souls in bondage by preaching as we did. Some of them, indeed, showed their liberty by trampling under foot the law of God and man.

When I saw such havoc made among the flock by his soft words and fair speeches, my soul was distressed within me, so that I could not eat my bread. I threw myself on the ground, and wished for death, saying, " Lord, why hast Thou suffered me to come back to see this evil ? "

When I preached, many stood like stocks or stones, and others smiled at one another ; so that my preaching was like a feather thrown against a

rock, or as water spilt upon the ground, except to a few strangers who were affected. I said, "Woe is me! for my children flee from me, as if I had brought the plague amongst them!"

I humbled myself before God, and begged for light that I might know His will: and I opened the Book on these words, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." I went out, and stood upon a table, and preached from these words to a large congregation, who seemed to be as a people that never heard the Gospel before; and there began to be a trembling amongst them, when many fell to the ground, and cried out, "Lord, save, or I perish!" Many came to me weeping, and said, "We have been deluded by the German song. O pray for us, that God may give us back that tender conscience which we have lost since you left us!" Then Mr. Viney went out of the congregation, hung down his head, and owned us no more. But my soul revived again; for sinners were converted, and others restored to the simplicity of the Gospel, who had been wise above what is written. But some continue to this day in their "happy-sinnership." I met with one of them, the other day, so drunk that he could not keep the cart-road. I asked him what he thought of himself now, if death were to seize him in that wretched condition. He said, that "he was not afraid to die, for he was as his Saviour would have him to be; and if He would have him to be

holy, He would make him so; but he was a poor sinner, and he hoped to be so to eternity." He said, "You and John Wesley are enemies to the Lamb; for you want people to be holy here. But the Lamb shall have the honour of saving me: I will not offer to save myself, like you Pharisees." I cried out, "Lord, keep me from that delusion!"

After some time I went to York, and found the seed sown in my captivity had sprung up; for nineteen had found peace with God, and twice as many were under convictions, though they had no one to instruct them in my absence. But the little books I left them, viz., the sermon on "Awake, thou that sleepest," and "Salvation by Faith," and the "Extract from the Homilies," and the "Nature and Design of Christianity," had been of great use to them. O what good might be done, if these books were spread through the land!

Soon after Mr. Wesley sent for me to London, and I found my soul blessed in speaking to the people; and many came to hear out of curiosity, when they heard it was the man that had been in prison: and several were convinced of the truth they heard.

When I was at London, I received a letter from Sunderland, wherein I was desired to go and preach there. Two men who had conversed with me, when I was captive there, had found the Lord; and they said that their souls panted for the salvation of their neighbours. So I see that God leads the blind by a way they know not: for I thought all that I had said there was as water spilt on the ground. But the Lord confirms His own word, when we see little outward appearance of it. O how wonderful are Thy works, O Lord! what a great fire is kindled by a

little spark in that place ! Now I see that the wise man's advice is good, where he saith, " Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that."

In my return from London, I preached at Nottingham Cross to a large congregation, most of whom behaved very well ; except a few who had prepared squibs to throw in my face : but three of them were burnt with the fire that they intended for me, and went away, and left me to finish my discourse quietly. When I had done, there came a serjeant to the Cross to me, and fell down on his knees, and said, " For the Lord's sake, pray for me ; for I came on purpose to pull you down ; but the dread of God fell upon me, (when I saw those burnt with the squibs that they intended to have thrown in your face,) and your words came as a sword to my heart ; and I am convinced that you are God's servant. I never served either God or my king as I ought to do ; but I hope I shall begin to lead a new life from this hour." This being in the presence of all the people, it seemed to season what I had said to them. As I was preaching, one Stephen Dickson, and two more preachers, came and stood awhile. They then spoke aloud, and said, " Why hear ye him ? For he is as legal and blind as the two Wesleys themselves."

When I got home, I found the people in a prosperous way, and the greatest part of them quite delivered from the Antinomian principles that they had fallen into during my captivity ; and the Lord had increased them in grace and number. To Him be the glory given !

Soon after I went to Newcastle, and laboured

there about three months, and had an opportunity to visit Sunderland. I preached at the Cross to the greatest part of the town, who behaved well, and stood all the time, though the snow was eight or nine inches deep. I went there as often as I could; and God visited many with His salvation there, and at Painshaw and Biddick, who blessed God that I had been sent among them. They said, that they would pray for our minister, who was the cause of my coming; for they were more beholden to him than to me; and, let him intend what he would, they had reason to bless God in his behalf. So it is evident, God hath His way in the whirlwind, and His path in the great waters.

On my return to Leeds, I found that the Lord had greatly blessed the labours of Jonathan Reeves and John Bennet; several being converted by their preaching, both there and at Birstal.

I was afterwards ordered to Bristol. In my way I called at Nottingham: and as I was preaching, a mob came into the house, and made a noise, as if they had been in a cock-pit, so that my voice could not be heard for some time. When they were silent, I began to speak; and one of them came behind me, and filled my mouth with dirt out of the kennel. I never felt myself so near being choked in my life; but when I had gotten the dirt out, I spoke again. The ringleader of them turned about, and said, "Let him alone; for he is right, and we are wrong; and if any one of you touch him, I will knock you down." He guarded me to my lodgings, and bore many blows for me: he desired me to pray for him, that he might not rest till he had found peace with God; for he was sure he had fought against the truth; but by grace he would do so no more.

I found peace at Wednesbury ; and several who had been persecutors were converted, and were content to bear the reproach of the Gospel. O what a good God have we to deal with ! It is plain, whoever turn at His reproof, He will pour out His Spirit upon them, and receive them into His family, after all they have done to provoke Him.

I found peace at all the places in my way to Bristol ; and my soul was refreshed among the people in that city. Here, and in some parts of Somersetshire and Wiltshire, I spent four months. Several were awakened at Paulton, Coleford, Oakley, Shepton-Mallet, Road, and Bearfield. So God doth work, and none can hinder, though the instruments be ever so weak if He command it, a worm shall shake the earth.

While I was in these parts, the rebels entered our land ; and many trembled for fear of the calamities that were expected at their coming, and attended the word and prayer, though they used not to attend before : but after the Lord had put His hook into the rebels' jaws, and turned them back by the way they came, many were as careless about their souls as ever.

A little before I left Bristol, I received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, containing only the following words :—" My brother, you must watch and pray, labour and suffer. My spirit is with you. You will shortly be wanted in Yorkshire. Farewell."—Indeed God hath made him a true prophet to me : for I see as much need to watch and pray as ever I did ; and I believe I shall, as long as I am in this howling wilderness ; and to exert all my strength in labouring to persuade sinners to flee from the wrath to come, for I see myself a debtor to all men.

I remember, about eight months before I was pressed for a soldier, Mr. C. Wesley was preaching near my house, in the open street, and said in his preaching, "Before I shall come to preach here again, the devil will be permitted to cast some of you into prison; but it shall turn to the glory of God, and to the furtherance of the Gospel." I little thought then that the cloud would burst on my head: but when it did, his words were a support to me in my trials.

When I left Bristol, I met with many sufferings. At almost every place where I came to preach, mobs were raised, as if they were determined to kill me and all God's children, in a kind of thanksgiving, because the rebels were conquered. O, what stupid creatures are men in their carnal state!

When I got to Nottingham, I preached to a peaceable congregation. About half an hour after I had done, as I and four or five more were sitting by the fire, the constable, with a mob at his heels, came rushing into the house, and said, "Where is the preacher?" I said, "I am he, sir." He replied, "You must go with me before the mayor." I said, "Where is your warrant?" He replied, "My staff is my warrant. Come, lads, help me; for I will make him go before the mayor." I said, "I am not afraid to go before him; but it is your business to take up that swearer: you hear there is another that swears; and if you don't take them up, it is in my power to make you pay forty shillings for not doing your duty." He regarded not what I said, but hauled me away. When he had got almost to the mayor's house, a gentlemanlike man said, "Constable, where are you going with him?" He said, "To the mayor." He replied, "Pray don't;

for the mayor is their friend, and says he will put any one that disturbs them into the house of correction: therefore carry him before Alderman H——l, and he will do for him." "Then we must turn another way," said he. But I said, "I insist upon going before the mayor." But he replied, "I will make you go where I please." I said, "You told me you must carry me before the mayor: I find you are a strange officer, to encourage swearing and tell lies yourself." Then the mob shouted, and cried, "Help us to guard the Methodist preacher to the house of correction."

By that time we got to the alderman's house, there were several hundreds gathered together; and when we came there, he said, "Whom have you brought, constable?" To me he said, "I wonder you can't stay in your own places: you might be convinced by this time, that the mob of Nottingham will never let you preach quietly in this town." I replied, "I beg pardon, sir, I did not know before now that this town was governed by a mob; for most such towns are governed by magistrates." He blushed, and said, "Do you think that we will protect Wesley and you, a pack of you? No. I believe you are the cause of all the commotions that have been in the land." I replied, "Sir, can you prove that one man who is joined to us did assist the Pretender with either men, money, or arms?" He said, "It hath been observed, that there was always such a preaching, brawling people before any judgment came upon the land." I replied, "That is the goodness of God towards the people, for sending His messengers to warn them to repent, that they may escape His judgments here, and the torments of the damned hereafter. Sir, you may as well say, that it was

through Jeremiah that the Chaldeans destroyed the temple, and took the inhabitants of Jerusalem captives, because he told them it would be so, if they did not repent and turn to God. No, sir, it is not for praying and preaching that evil comes on a land, but for swearing and cursing, drunkenness and debauchery; for oppressing the poor, and loving pleasure more than God; and for denying the Lord that bought us. These are the people that bring the sword, pestilence, and famine into the land." The constable said, "Do you think we will take warning by such fellows as you?" I said, "If you will not, you must feel the blow; for if there be not a reformation in the land, God will pour out His judgments upon man and beast. Therefore, I warn you all to look unto the rod; for it is appointed to them that disobey the Gospel." Then the alderman said, "So, so; you must not preach here. I verily believe you are a good man." Then he said, "Constable, I will not send this man to the house of correction. I think, as you keep a public-house, you may let him lie there to-night; for he is on his journey." The constable said, "I beg that he may not be at my house." "Well, then," said he, "he may go to Mary White's, where he came from." I spoke a few more words to him, and wished him a good night. He said, "Mr. Nelson, I wish you well, wherever you go."

When I had got into the street, I do not know but there might be a thousand people; but I saw not one that I knew; therefore, I went and stood under a lamp, that my acquaintances might see me. The alderman came to the door, and said to the constable, "Take care of Mr. Nelson, that no one molest him: see him safe to Mary White's." The constable

seemed much ashamed, and did as he was ordered. Then the man that advised him to carry me before the alderman came to me, and said, "Thy nimble tongue has delivered thee at this time." I said, "No, sir, it is my God, who hath the hearts of all men in His hand."

When we got to Mary White's, we sang a hymn, and gave praise to God, and prayed for our enemies, and recommended each other to God's care and protection; and we had a comfortable meeting at five the next morning.

When I got home, I found all things in a comfortable way; and the Lord added many to the number of His children that winter, and several died in the triumph of faith. "Wonderful art Thou, O Lord, in all Thy works: and as Thou art in majesty, so art Thou in mercy!"

One day, I happened to fall in company with a gentleman, that was called one of the chief teachers in Israel, who began to ridicule Mr. Wesley, and all that labour with him; saying, "They are a short-sighted, ignorant set of people; neither are they willing to be instructed in the truths of the Gospel." I said, "Sir, I am one of them, and I am open to conviction. Show me our error, and I hope, by grace, to forsake it." He said, "You all deny the faith delivered to the saints, in denying election and reprobation." I said, "I do not know that that is the faith of the Gospel; for the Apostle Paul saith, 'It was not written for Abraham's sake alone, that faith was counted to him for righteousness, but for our sakes, if we believe in Him that raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.' I think, therefore, that this is the faith of the

Gospel,—that I with my heart believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and rose again for my justification; that He died for me, that His life might be made manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might not live to myself, but to Him who died for me. And this faith kindles in the hearts of those who receive it a flame of love to God, and to every soul of man; and I would not give a straw for any thing called faith, short of this. The same apostle saith, that his commission to the people and to the Gentiles was, ‘to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ;’ but there is not one word of reprobation in his commission: and if any come to preach another Gospel, let him be accursed.” He stormed at me, and called me a muddy-headed creature several times. I answered, “My head is muddy, or your doctrine is unclean. If you clear God, and do not make Him a liar, nor guilty of perjury, nor the author of all sin, then I may think as you do.” He asked, “What do you mean?” I replied, “He hath said several times, that He is no respecter of persons; but you have given Him the lie many times since I came into your company. And you have made Him guilty of perjury: for He swears by His own life, that He hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner; and you have affirmed, that it is God’s pleasure to leave the greatest part of mankind to an unmerciful devil, to govern them here, and to torment them hereafter; nay, you affirm, that it is His good pleasure to damn infants from their mother’s womb. O sir, beware what you say against the God of love! for you have made Him

worse than Moloch : by your words, that man is as much doing the will of God that cuts his father's throat, and that ravisheth his own mother, as he that feedeth the hungry, and clotheth the naked ! O sir, is this the God that was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself ? No, He is loving to every man, and His mercy is over all His works : and St. John saith, 'He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God ; for God is love.' " Then he made a noise like a butcher in the bear-garden. When I could be heard, I said, " Sir, if ever you preach again, I must look upon you either as a fool or knave." He asked, " Why so ? " I replied, " You say, the elect were chosen from eternity, and the rest set apart for misery ; and that the decree cannot be broken : and if you think one of the chosen can be lost for want of preaching, or one of the reprobates can be saved by your preaching, you must be void of reason. And you must be something worse, if you believe the thing is fixed, and that preaching will aggravate the torments of the lost, and that the greatest part of your hearers are lost, who help to maintain you as a gentleman, only to increase their damnation." He looked at me with a stern countenance, and said, " You are as bad as Wesley himself." I replied, " Sir, why do you find fault ? If what you say be true, God hath decreed me to think as I do. And how can I break this decree ? " He said, " I hate to hear you talk so." I answered, " Do you want God to break His decree ? " Then he went away in a rage.

Another preacher of the same sort heard of our dispute, and told me he would put a question to me which would drive me from inherent righteousness ; viz., " Whether the white raiment that those

appeared in before the throne of heaven was not the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ?" I said, "No, sir." But he affirmed it was. I then said, "It is almost blasphemy, in my opinion, to say so." He said, "What do you mean?" I answered, "The Scripture saith that 'they came out of great tribulation; and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' I never heard that His life was stained by sin; neither man nor devil could accuse Him thereof. His righteousness had no need of washing: it is blasphemy to say that it had. For shame, go home and read the Scriptures, and you will see it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses from all sin, but cloaks none. When a soul appears in that company, it is not like a dunghill covered with snow, but really pure; and is, by the power of Jesus Christ's Spirit, restored to the image of God, in which it was at first created; and then, and not till then, can it enter in at the gates of the New Jerusalem, and join the angels, and archangels, and spirits of just men made perfect, to sing an eternal anthem to the great Three-One." He said, "You shall never make me think as Wesley and you do." I replied, "If you do not in this world, you will in the next; for if you die defiled and unclean, you must be cast into a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: so you had better begin now yourself, and advise your hearers to cry out, 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me, O Lord!' for none but the pure in heart can see God." He said, "I do not care what you can say; for my salvation was completed when Christ hung on the cross." I replied, "Not so; for He did not repent for you. You must repent for yourself, or eternally perish, after all He hath done and

suffered for you ; and you must also perish if you do not believe that He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Nor was He risen again when He hung on the cross, which yet was a necessary part of the work that He came to do. Nor was He born again for you ; for you must be born again, or you can never enter into the kingdom of heaven ; and be really made a partaker of the Divine nature by regeneration, or you have no more right to call God your Father, or heaven your inheritance, than I have to call King George my father, and his throne mine." He said, " You are a strange set of people," and left me. O my God, take the matter into Thy own hand, and put a stop to that anti-christian doctrine which is spreading as a flood in our land ; and give the people to see the truth as it is in Jesus ; and create such a hungering and thirsting in them after inward holiness, that they may pant as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, till all that is in them be made holiness to the Lord!

I was in hopes that I had done with that sort of people ; but a third came to me soon after, saying, in a rage, " You are an enemy to the Gospel." I asked, " Wherein, sir ?" He replied, " In saying that Christ died for all ; and in denying imputed righteousness." I answered, " Faith in Christ is imputed for righteousness to every soul that believeth ; and they are freely forgiven for His sake, received into God's favour and family, and are made partakers of the same Spirit that raised our Lord from the dead ; whereby they are enabled to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live a godly, righteous, and sober life in this present evil world, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. In the Scripture sense, these live not, but Christ liveth in them ; and He

doth actually destroy the works of the devil, and re-instamp the image of God in their souls; and I read of no other qualification to fit a soul for God's company." He said, "You are stupid; and so are all they that follow Wesley; but I believe as I say, and so do many better men than either he or you." I answered, "If you and all the preachers in England were to believe so, I will not give you credit, unless the word of God *expressly* says, that Christ did *not* die for all: but it saith several times, that He did die for *all*; but not once, that He did *not* die for all: and how you came to be wise above what is written, I know not; neither do I want such wisdom." I added, "Tell me, sir, did you ever feel the love of God in your own soul? If you did, I appeal to your conscience, whether at that time you did not find love to every soul of man. Now, this was not your nature, but the nature of God; and if one drop of the bucket could so swell your soul, what must that ocean be from which it came! But I cannot help thinking, that you of that principle never knew God; or, if you had known Him, you have forgotten Him; for you make Him worse than Moloch." On this he fell into a rage with me. I said, "Be not angry with me, but rather be consistent with yourself; and if I could believe as you do, I would not have so long troubled the people with preaching; for you say, 'Not one of them that Christ died for can perish, nor the rest be saved.' Then why do you and I beat the air? For Christ will have His, you say; and the devil must have his: therefore, let each have his own quietly; and do not torment the poor creatures before the time." He then went away in haste, and sent for arguments to those of his own stamp in London, to put a stop

to universal redemption and inward holiness; but he never yet brought them to me.

Soon after, I met with a Roman Catholic, who began to condemn all sects and parties, saying, they must all perish that die out of the pale of the Church; that there is but one Church, and that the Church of Rome is it." I replied, "Whatever the Church of Rome is, you do not belong to Christ's church yet; for you curse and swear, and get drunk, and break the Sabbath: and while you continue to do so, you belong to the synagogue of Satan." But he said, "Our priests have Peter's power, and could and would forgive the sins of all that belonged to our community." I answered, "Not so; for one wicked man cannot forgive another, nor forgive his own sins. No: it is God that is offended; and it is He that is offended who must forgive the offender. One rebel cannot forgive another: it is the king that must forgive both, or both must suffer. You say also, that the wafer is the real body, and the wine the real blood, of Christ, after consecration: then, according to you, whosoever is a partaker of it hath eternal life abiding in him. But the Scripture saith, that 'no whoremonger, or drunkard, or blasphemer, hath eternal life abiding in him;' and you know that many of your Church that are partakers of the eucharist are such. Nay, St. Paul tells us, in the fifth chapter of Galatians, of seventeen sorts of sinners that shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore be not deceived, neither cast away the reason God hath given you. Now bring your wafer, and set it before a swine, an ape, or a bear, and they will devour it: how, then, can you dare to say that it is Divine? If it be so, these brutes must be raised up at the last

day, as well as you." He gave me bad words; and another of them said, if he might have his will on me, he would have me boiled in oil: they then left me. O my God, rend away the veil of ignorance from that people, and let all nations see Thy salvation!

On my journey to the place where I was going to preach, I called at a gentleman's house, where was much company; and he insisted I should stay and dine with them. I desired to be excused. He said, "What is your reason? You have time enough on your hands." I replied, "Sir, I don't care to affront you in your own house." "What do you mean?" he said. I answered, "If I affront the gentlemen at your table, it will affront you: and I do not expect to sit at the table to-day, without hearing the name of the Lord blasphemed, though there be two clergymen in the company; and if I do, I must reprove them, or carry a guilty conscience home, which I will not do for all you have." He said, "I insist on your dining with me; and you are welcome to reprove sin: and, if I should be guilty, reprove me first." I said, "You, sir, as soon as any one; or I should not love your soul as well as another's."

When we were seated, I had scarcely time to eat one morsel, before I had occasion to reprove; for one gentleman was a Roman Catholic, and he hardly spoke three words, but one was an oath. I said to the master of the feast, "There is one thing too deep for me; I cannot fathom it." He asked, "What is that?" I answered, "When I see a man endowed with reason, and of a liberal education, run himself out of breath for no prize." He said, "What do you mean?" I replied, "When a man will damn his soul with swearing and cursing, it is

as if he ran for no prize. If he damn his soul to gratify his vain and foolish desires, he hath a sort of pleasure, though it is brutish; but the other brings neither pleasure nor credit." Then said the gentleman, "Peter swore." I replied, "He did so; but when he had done, he went out and wept bitterly; and I do not suppose he ever swore again.—Sir, I wish you would do as he did." He answered, "Well, I own it is not right to swear; but here are some of your clergy, as you call yourself a Churchman, that will swear as much as I, when they are hunting." I said, "Sir, I am sorry to hear that; but it will not justify either you or me, if we swear, because your priest and my minister will swear." Then another said, "Do you think that Mr. John Wesley would not swear a vain oath for a hundred pounds?" I answered, "I believe he would not swear a vain oath to save his neck from the gallows. If I were sure he would, I would turn my back on him forever." The Roman Catholic said, "I neither care what you nor he may say; for hunt I will, and I have as good a pack of fox-dogs as any in the kingdom, and a couple of as good horses to follow them, which do but cost me about two hundred pounds a year; and I can well afford it." But I replied, "Sir, how will you answer for spending two hundred pounds a year, when you come to give an account of your stewardship?" He answered, "It is my own; I am not a steward." I replied, "You are but a steward, sir: for 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; so are the cattle on a thousand hills.' He says, 'The gold is Mine, and the silver is Mine;' and He will say to you, 'Thou hast taken My gold and My silver, and spent it on dogs, horses, and fighting-cocks, in the room of feeding the

hungry, and clothing the naked ; or of being as a husband to the widow, or as a father to the fatherless, or as eyes to the blind, or legs to the lame.' O sir, consider it is but a little while before God will say to you, 'Come, and give an account of thy stewardship ; for thou mayest be no longer steward !' Then you will wish that all you had spent in voluptuousness and vain pleasures had been given to the poor and needy." Then the two clergymen whispered together ; and the whisper went round to the Roman Catholic ; and he said, "Why did God make dogs of such a nature, if it were not for gentlemen's diversion ?" I answered, "Who dare say that God made them so ?" He said, "Did not God make them ?" "Yes, sir," I replied, "and you too ; but not as you are." He said, "What do you mean ?" I replied, "When God had finished the creation, He pronounced everything good ; and there was no death in any creature. But when sin entered into the world, then death entered into the world by sin. But before man sinned against his Maker, there was nothing in one creature that could take the life of another. No ; the hare would as soon have hunted the hound, as the hound the hare. At that time, the lamb would as soon have killed the lion, as the lion the lamb ; and the pigeon the hawk, as the hawk the pigeon. But since the fall, the earth is cursed for man's sins, and everything that it produces ; nay, it is all a curse to man, till it is sanctified to him by prayer. And I do not believe that you or any who is here go to your knees to desire God to give His blessing on your undertakings, when you go a hunting, and to enable you to use the hounds and horses to His glory ; not believing that you can do anything that will please Him better." He said, "I have heard that Wesley had taught you the art

of reasoning; and I find he has." I replied, "Sir, if you or any man that is present can disprove what I say, let him do it now."

After my return to Leeds, I went to Wakefield, and preached to a small but serious congregation.

The next morning I set out for Kirkheaton; and in my way I called to breakfast with a friend in Horbury. Before I had been there half an hour, the house was beset with almost the whole town, men, women, and children, who cried out, as with one voice, "Bring him out, that we may put him into the river." I went out to them, and said, "What do you want?" They d——d me, and said, "You, you Methodist dog." I replied, "What have I done to you? I am not going to preach here now." Then the parson's son swore, "You shall never preach more; for we will drown you in the river this day." And I found that almost the whole town had agreed together, that all the journeymen and apprentices should leave work as soon as the next preacher came into the town, and put a halter about his neck, and drag him into the river, and drown him, that the town might be quit of them for ever; and the parson's son, as the captain of the mob, had prepared a crazy man to put the halter about my neck: and he stood with one in his hand, and a butcher with a rope to hale me along; but, while my voice could be heard, they had not power to touch me. Then they went to the clerk's house, and got six large hand-bells, and came and rung them round me, so that my voice could not be heard; and then the madman, who was about six feet high, put the halter to my throat. But I put my hand between my throat and it, and pushed it back; and the man fell to the ground, as if he had been knocked down with an

axe; and the butcher stood trembling, and touched me not. The constable then came, with his staff in his hand; upon which the mob cried, "Here is the constable: let him come, and he will put the rope on him now; for he will help us." He came to me, and I said, "Are you the constable?" He answered, "Yes, I am; and that I will let you know." I replied, "I am glad you are come; and I charge you in the king's name to do your office." He asked, "What is my office?" I answered, "It is to quell this mob, and to deliver me out of their hands; and, if I have done anything contrary to law, to carry me before a magistrate, and let me be punished by the law." He turned pale, and said, "Whither are you going?" I answered, "I was going to the stable to get my horse, but was stopped by this mob." He bade them be silent, and said, "Follow me." He went to the stable, and led out my horse, and held the stirrup, while I got on. Then, after leading me quite through the crowd, he bade me go in the name of the Lord. O my God! hitherto Thou hast helped me!

When I got to my place, we had a comfortable meeting; for the power of the Lord was present to heal; and one that had waited long was set at liberty; and all praised the Lord on my behalf, for His delivering me from the hands of the ungodly.

I went once more to York, in Passion-week; and preached on Good-Friday, at Hepworth Moor, to a serious, peaceable people; and gave out that I would preach there on Easter-Sunday, at eight in the evening. Then I went to a village about three miles from York, where I preached to a very large and well-behaved congregation.

On Easter-Sunday I went to Hepworth Moor at

the time appointed, and found two companies of people assembled: the one came to hear the word, and the other to mob. After we had sung a hymn and prayed, I opened my book on these words, "God having raised up His Son Jesus Christ, sent Him to bless you, in turning every one of you from your iniquities:" and I went on to prove that this was His business in this present evil world, actually to save all true believers from their sins; and that it was neither sect, party, nor opinion, that made a man a real member of Christ's church; but the real Christians are those that are saved from their sins by Jesus Christ,—from sins both of omission and of commission; and everything short of this, was not Christianity. "Therefore," I said, "be not deceived: for whosoever is defiled, or unclean, cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, but must be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. And as this day is kept in the remembrance of God's raising His Son up to bless us, let every one cry out, 'Lord, bless me, and turn me from my iniquities!'" Then a gentleman, a Papist, that brought the rebels to mob, cried out, "Knock out the brains of that mad dog!" and perfectly gnashed with his teeth. Immediately a shower of stones came, and hit many of the people; and they continued to throw, till not one could stand to hear me. Nevertheless, not one stone hit me, though I stood as a mark on the table, when all were fled from me; and I talked to the mob. But, as I was going away, a piece of a brick struck me on the back of my head, and I fell flat on my face, and must have lain for some time, had not two men lifted me up; but I could not stand for some time. The blood ran down my back quite into my shoes;

and the mob followed me through the city, swearing that they would kill me when they got me out of it. I said unto the Lord, "Lord, Thou wast slain without the gate, and Thou canst deliver me from the hands of these blood-thirsty men." When I was got over the bridge, a gentleman came and took me by the hand, saying, "What is the matter, you bleed so?" Some of the mob answered, "This is but little to what we will do to him." Then the gentleman pulled me into his house, and told the mob, if they did not disperse immediately, some of them should be in the Castle before an hour was at an end. Then they fled away; and he sent for a surgeon to dress my head.

I lay down awhile; and brother Salton came with my horse, and I rode to Ackham, where I was to have preached at five in the afternoon; but just at that time, there came about ten young gentlemen,—some in the coach, some on the box, and some behind the coach,—who began to sing the songs of the drunkards, and to throw rotten eggs at the women.

I and two more were walking in a little field by the house, when there came two big men, one of whom swore, "Here he is: I will kill him, if there were not another man alive." I told him that he had not any reason to kill me, for I had done him no wrong; nor any one in that town. Then he pulled off his hat and wig, and gave them to the other man, saying, "If I do not kill him, I will be d——d." Then he came as fiercely to me as he could, with an intent to run his head against the pit of my stomach; but I stepped aside, and he pitched on his head. When he got up, I spoke to him again, and asked what I had done amiss to him. He gave me no answer, but ran at me again, and caught hold on the

collar of my shirt, which rent in pieces, and he fell down at my feet again. Then he got up, and came to me a third time ; and, as I made no resistance, he threw me down, and leaped with his knees on my belly several times, till he had beaten the breath out of me, and set my head a-bleeding again. He then went to the gentlemen that hired him and the other man to kill me, and said, "Gentlemen, I have killed the preacher : he lies dead in the croft." And then he took one of our friends, and threw him against the corner of a wall, and broke two of his ribs. The parson's brother said, "Well, we will see for ourselves : we will not take your word." Upon which he and about twenty more came to me ; but my breath was come again, and I was turned on my face, and lay bleeding on the ground. One of them said, "He will get his death if he lie there awhile." Then they lifted me up, and said, "We will help you into the house." When I could speak, I said, "Your mercy is only to make way for more cruelty. Gentlemen, if I have done anything contrary to the law, let me be punished by the law. I am a subject of King George ; and to his law I appeal ; and I am willing to go before my Lord Mayor, as he is the king's magistrate." But they cursed me and the king too, saying he was as bad as we, or he would have hanged us all like dogs before now. One actually d——d him, and said, "If he were here, we would serve him as bad as you."

The parson's brother cursed me, and said, "According to your preaching, you would prove our ministers to be blind guides and false prophets ; but we will kill you as fast as you come." One said, "If Wesley come on Tuesday, he shall not live another day in this world." When I got into the

street, they set up a huzzah, and a person caught hold on my right hand, and gave me a hasty pluck ; at the same time, another struck me on the left side of my head, and knocked me down. As I got up, they knocked me down eight times ; and when I lay on the ground, not being able to get up, they took me by the hair of my head, and dragged me upon the stones for nearly twenty yards ; some kicking me on my thighs and sides with their feet, as the others dragged me along ; and six of them got on my body and thighs, to tread the Holy Spirit out of me, as they said. Then they let me alone a little while, and said one to another, " We cannot kill him." One said, " I have heard that a cat has nine lives ; but I think he has nine score." Another said, " If he has, he shall die this day." A third said, " Where is his horse ? for he shall quit the town immediately." And they said to me, " Order your horse to be brought to you ; for you shall go before we leave you." I said, " I will not ; for you intend to kill me in private, that you may escape justice. But if you do murder me, it shall be in public ; and it may be that the gallows may bring you to repentance, and your souls may be saved from the wrath to come." Then one of them swore, if I would not go, he would put me into the draw-well ; and they lifted up the lid of the well, and dragged me towards it : but a woman, big with child, stood by the well, and pushed several of them down, so that they could not get me to it. Then two gentlewomen, who came out of the city, called the gentlemen by their names that were striving to put me in ; who all let me go, and, turning to the gentlewomen, looked as men confounded. In the mean time, some friends got me up, and helped me into the house. Then all the mob

set out for the city, singing debauched songs. This was on Easter Sunday.

I heard one of them say, as he got into the coach, "It is impossible for him to live; and if John Wesley comes on Tuesday, we will kill him. Then we shall be quite rid of the Methodists for ever; for no one will dare to come, if they two be killed."

When they were gone, I sent for something to sweat me; and I sweat so violently, that in the morning my shirt was as if it had been stained with raw beef. But I was not so sore as I expected; for I set out to meet Mr. Wesley, and was enabled to ride forty miles that day.

I met him at Osmotherley, and heard him preach on a tombstone, in the churchyard, to a large and serious congregation. I found his word to come with power to my soul, and was constrained to cry out, "O Lord, I will praise Thee for Thy goodness to me; for Thou hast been with me in all my trials; Thou hast brought me out of the jaws of death; and though Thou didst permit men to ride over my head, and didst lay afflictions on my loins, yet Thou hast brought me through fire and water into a wealthy place!" And, indeed, in all my persecutions, my soul was kept in peace; so that I felt neither fear nor anger.

So far, Lord, I am Thy witness: for Thou dost give strength for the day, according to Thy word, and grace to help in time of need. O my dear Redeemer, how shall I praise Thee as Thou oughtest to be praised? O let my life be a living sacrifice to Thee; for it is by Thee alone that I escaped both temporal and eternal death!

When I had told Mr. Wesley of the treatment I had met with, he blessed God for my deliverance.

However, I advised him not to go to York at that time, but to go to Leeds ; and God blessed his word to many souls at Leeds that week.

Thus far I can say, "The Lord is my Helper." O may I never grieve His Spirit! Then will He be "my Guide unto death, and my Portion for ever."

This is a plain narrative of the dealings of God and man with me, from my youth to the forty-second year of my natural life.

JOHN NELSON.

It does not appear that any journal was kept by Mr. Nelson after this time. In 1747 he was present at a Conference held in London, which consisted of only nine preachers ; and at this meeting, the peculiar doctrines of Methodism, as held by Mr. John Wesley, were examined.

From the year 1750 to 1770 Mr. Nelson was stationed as a regular preacher to the societies in various parts of England ; viz., London, Bristol, Birstal, Leeds, Derbyshire, Yarm, and York, as appears in the Minutes of Conference ; and once he visited Ireland.

In 1771 a particular circumstance occurred which does honour to the Rules of Methodism. A woman whom Mr. Nelson had dismissed from the society, above twelve months before, for misbehaviour, stood charged at the York assizes with a capital crime. Mr. Nelson, being at that time in the York Circuit, was subpoenaed to appear at the Crown bar, to assign his reasons for having put this woman out of

the Methodist Society. Mr. Nelson read the Rules of the Society in court; and at the end of that rule which forbids contracting a debt without any probable way of paying it, he stopped, and said, "My lord, this was my reason for dismissing this woman from the Society to which I belong." The judge arose, and said, "Good morality, Mr. Nelson;" and then, being seated again, desired him to read the rest of the Rules. After hearing them, his lordship said emphatically to the court, "Gentlemen, this is true Christianity."

In 1773 Mr. Nelson was stationed in the Leeds Circuit; and, after seeing the work of God spread through the county of York, where God made him the honoured instrument of beginning the revival, he ended his labours and his life in peace, on July 18th, 1774. His remains were conveyed to Birstal for interment amidst thousands of spectators.

His tombstone bears the following inscription, in addition to some homely rhymes, the pious effusion of "the unlettered muse:"—

"JOHN NELSON

DEPARTED THIS LIFE, JULY THE 18TH, 1774,

AGED 67 YEARS.

MARTHA, HIS WIFE,

DEPARTED THIS LIFE, SEPT. THE 11TH, 1774,

AGED 69 YEARS."

THE
REMAINS OF MR. JOHN NELSON.

FRAGMENT FIRST :

CONCERNING HIS GRANDAUGHTER.

My grandaughter, about sixteen years of age, rejoiced in the Lord about six weeks before she died. Her last words to her father and mother were, "Fret not; for I am going to Jesus, and to help the angels to praise God."

FRAGMENT SECOND :

CONCERNING SARAH SCHOOLS.

SARAH SCHOOLS had been a steady follower of the Lord about twenty years. I visited her several times in her illness, and always found comfort to my own soul.

The morning she died, she said to her son, "I have had a glorious night, and now I am ready to go to my dear Redeemer. In the fore part of the night, there was a cloud between Him and my soul; but I cried, 'Lord, hide not Thy face from me!' and immediately the cloud dispersed, and the glory of God shone bright on my soul."

When Miss B. had prayed with her, she said,

"Hold on in the way thou art in, and we shall meet again in glory." Having said this, she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

JOHN NELSON.

FRAGMENT THIRD:

CONCERNING S. H., OF HANGING-HEATON.

S. H. falling into a kind of trance, when she came to herself, she told her husband, she had been both in heaven and hell. When she was in the latter, she said, she saw several there whom she had known on earth. As she came out, she said, she saw one she knew (whom she then named) tumbling in, head and heels together. As soon as she came to herself, she sent her husband to see whether he was dead or not. When he inquired of the family, they had no thought of his death, seeing he was quite well when he went to bed. But, on going to see, they found him dead, with his head and heels together, as she had seen him before.

On this, she gave some account of what she had seen in heaven. Among others, she saw Paul Greenwood, who shone like a sunbeam, together with many more whom she knew on earth. Moreover, she saw the place she was to go to. She then told them when she was to die, and accordingly died exactly at that time.

When these things were noised abroad, many hearts were filled with fear; and perhaps a few more stirred up to seek the Lord with great earnestness.

N.B. This woman had known the Lord, and adorned the Gospel, twelve years.

JOHN NELSON.

FRAGMENT FOURTH:

CONCERNING MRS. CROWDER.

MRS. CROWDER had adorned the Gospel about six years, and was a great pattern both of charity and piety. She laboured under a lingering illness, and was worn almost to a skeleton. The last time I visited her, she seemed like a bride adorned for the bridegroom. I found the Lord was very present with her. The last words she spoke were, "All is well! for I have neither doubt nor fear." Then, with a smiling countenance, she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, while many cried out, "O let me die her death!"

FRAGMENT FIFTH:

CONCERNING J. B., OF KIRKHEATON.

J. B. was awakened about thirty-one years ago, and soon received a sense of the love of God; but, marrying, the cares of the world so beset him, that he walked in heaviness some time. When Mr. Wesley came first to Birstal, the Lord again revealed Himself to him, and in such a manner, that he never lost His presence after for a single week. From that time, he adorned the Gospel in the whole of his behaviour; though for ten years he laboured under a very sore disorder. In the midst of his suffering, he mightily praised God, and exhorted the class, which he met for twenty-eight years, to keep in the way they were then in. He said, "God will give

you strength for your day, as He hath enabled me to fight the good fight of faith. Through Him, I am more than conqueror; and there is a crown of glory prepared for me. I have no doubt or fear; for perfect love casteth out fear. Tell John Nelson to preach over my corpse." So saying, he resigned his soul to Jesus, and left a good savour behind him.

FRAGMENT SIXTH:

CONCERNING S. CHASTER, OF DAW-GREEN.

S. CHASTER had for ten years so adorned the Gospel, that it became a proverb in Dewsbury, "that few could live like S. Chaster." I visited her in her illness, and found great satisfaction. She said she had never lost her first love. When the Lord called her, she was full of good works, and seemed like a shock of wheat fully ripe.

FRAGMENT SEVENTH:

CONCERNING H. BOOTH, OF CLECKHEATON.

H. BOOTH was converted one-and-thirty years ago, and retained a sense of the goodness of God a great part of that time, though she had many trials in her family. The first two years her husband strove to provoke her; but, coming to hear Mr. Charles Wesley, he was convinced that she was right and

he was wrong. He then sought the Lord, and found Him. Since then he has been a class-leader twenty-seven years; all which time he has also had the Gospel preached in his house. His wife was quite happy in her last illness, and finished her course with joy. Thus is the Lord giving both living and dying witnesses of His grace, that the saints may be encouraged to go on, and that sinners may be without excuse.

JOHN NELSON.

Dec. 24th, 1772.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT
OF
MR. NELSON'S DEATH.

LIZEDS, *July 22d*, 1774.

LAST Monday, about three o'clock, Mr. John Nelson, coming in from dining with Mr. Towat, went up into his room, and said to S. B., "I do not know that I have been so well after dinner this long time." In a little while, being seized with a violent purging and vomiting, he was helped to bed. He had not been there long before he became insensible; and at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon he died. On Wednesday his remains were carried through the streets of Leeds, in their way to Birstal, attended by thousands, who were either singing or weeping. It was truly a very solemn season to many, to see him carried to his grave, who had done and suffered so much in these parts for the honour of God and the good of men. But as he died in the Lord, he now rests from his labours, and his works follow him. O, how ought we to be humbled, on seeing the first instruments of the great revival of religion in our day called away so fast! Lord, in mercy to the rising generation, continue a constant succession of holy and useful men, who shall not count their lives dear unto themselves, when they may be spent for Thy sake!

A LETTER

FROM MR. JOHN NELSON TO THE REV. JOHN
WESLEY:

*Written when Methodism was in its Infancy in
Yorkshire.*

DEAR FATHER IN THE LORD,

My most earnest prayers (with my best love) for you and your brother are, that God may prosper His work in your hands more and more, and make your souls as a watered garden. His right hand hath done great things in these parts, both in converting and finishing the work of faith with power. We have had three that died in triumph, since I gave your brother the last account. The first was of Baildon Society, who had been in a justified state about three years: she was very exact in observing all meetings as long as she was able. Her disorder was a consumption; in the beginning of which she had many conflicts and temptations: but for about ten weeks before she died, she was a monument of wonder to all that beheld her; for she did nothing but praise God, and tell what He had done for her soul, and exhorted all she saw to seek the Lord while He may be found, and went

praising Him out of this howling wilderness. The next was one of Halifax : several of our people were with her when she died, who had attended her in her illness, and said she was as great a witness for God as ever they saw in that place. She had enjoyed a sense of pardon about two years. The next was Mr. Farray, who died the 17th inst., in the seventy-third year of his age. He was a man of unstained character, and looked upon, by priest and people, to be the best Christian in that parish before he heard us. The minister of the chapel-of-ease often slept at his house, and strove to prejudice him and his family against the Methodists ; and this he had done so effectually, that when Mr. Ellison was buried, he would not come to his funeral, because I was to preach, though he was his brother-in-law. But it pleased God to strike with convictions all of his family that were at the funeral ; and afterwards his wife. His two sons and his daughter prevailed upon him to hear for himself, as they had done. The first time he came, I was preaching from blind Bartimeus. When I had done, he cried, and said, " I have been blind for threescore and ten years, and knew not but I was right till this day." From that time, he and all his house attended the word at all opportunities. As Mr. Merrick was preaching, he received a sense of God's love, and ever since had been steadfast, full of good works, ready to confess his blindness by nature, and the riches of God's love to him and to his house, in what company soever he came. He had three weeks' illness, which ended in his death, during which time I often visited him, to the satisfaction of my own soul ; for he was praising God in the midst of racking pain. At one of my visits, two of his brothers came to see him ; and he

declared to them, he had lived to the age of man before he knew for what end he was born, and why Christ was sent into the world. Then he broke out in tears of joy, and said, "What could God have done more for me and my family than He hath done? for He hath not left an hoof of us in Egyptian darkness. We are all His witnesses that He is a forgiving God. O, my brothers, seek that you may find Him to be so to you!" He desired me to preach over him when he was dead; and said, it might be a means to stir up some soul to seek salvation. This I did to a great multitude, from, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." It seemed to be a glorious season. O may we all praise God in behalf of His glorious witnesses, and tread in their steps, that our last end may be like theirs!

The stewards and trustees of the chapel we are building, and which is now slated, desire you to give them advice how the writings must be made, which are to convey the power into the hands of seven men, to be as trustees, and for what use the house and ground are to be employed; and, as it is intended for pious use, whether it must not be enrolled in Chancery. They desire you to send a copy of the deeds of some of the houses you have been concerned in, as soon as possible; for all is in the hands of one man, and if he should die, it would cause great confusion before things could be properly settled. We all desire an interest in your prayers, and your advice in this particular. God hath opened the hearts of the people beyond expectation; and we trust He will send help from some quarter, that we may finish what we have begun in His name. I am employed in hewing stone in the day-time, and at night calling sinners to the blood of Jesus. My

wife joins in love with me to you and your brother, and all the church of God in that place!

We think you are long in coming to see us. May God hasten you hither!

I am

Your unworthy son in the Gospel,

JOHN NELSON.

BIRSTAL, YORKSHIRE, *Aug. 29th, 1750.*

MR. NELSON, as a man, was lively, active, and strong, of great resolution and undaunted courage. In his natural state, he restrained not his corrupt desires; and through the force of example was precipitated into the barbarous follies of the day, such as hunting, cock-fighting, bull-baiting, &c.; yet, in all his transactions with men, he preserved the utmost punctuality.

As a Christian, his experience was clear and scriptural. Previously, however, to his conversion, he was restless and unhappy for some years: this increased into a deep conviction of sin. The Lord, by a chain of providences, brought him under the preaching of the Gospel, in Moorfields, London. He then saw that the way of salvation by Jesus was the only way to peace and rest. He was soon after enabled to believe to the saving of his soul. Great was the deliverance, and unspeakable the joy, when "Christ was formed in him the hope of glory." From that time, he became a zealous defender of the salvation he experienced. Jesus, the only name given whereby we can be saved, was ever dear to

him ; and his life appeared to be one continued act of faith. When called to preach the Gospel, he conferred not with flesh and blood. He knew, from experience, the depth of human depravity ; and however innumerable the sins are which spring from this corrupt fountain, he also knew they must all fall before the Gospel, when received by faith. As he had sought salvation by works himself, he knew well how to distinguish between the form and the power of godliness ; and to promote the latter, he laid the axe to the root of the tree. "Ye must be born again," was a common topic with him. As he knew the inseparable connexion between believing in Christ, and bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness ; so he was as careful to insist upon the latter as to preach the former : and his own life showed the excellence of raising the superstructure of holiness, as well as relying with implicit confidence on the "precious corner-stone laid in Zion." In short, though his language was plain, it was mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. The trumpet from his mouth did not give an uncertain sound. His natural understanding being strong, and aided by the influence of the Holy Spirit, he had the testimony of men of parts and learning, that he was "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." From his views and experience of Gospel doctrines, he could, on the one hand, point the penitent to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world ;" while, on the other, he could, with pure, disinterested affection, declare to the believer, that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin ;" knowing that "He saveth to the uttermost all those that come unto God by Him." And though God gave

him many living and dying witnesses, as seals to his ministry, he was convinced, in the midst of his success, that it was "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord."

Before any Circuits were formed, he went through Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, and several other counties in England; travelling on foot, labouring with his own hands, with no other prospect than to make known the way of life to thousands that were dead in trespasses and sins, that the captives of Satan, and the slaves of sin, might enjoy the liberty of the sons of God.

This account shall conclude with an extract of a letter from Mrs. Fletcher, dated "November 28th, 1807:"—

"He was an extraordinary man for tenderness of conscience, watchfulness over his words, and especially for self-denial and rigid temperance. He made it a rule to rise out of bed about twelve o'clock, and sit up till two, for prayer and converse with God: then he slept till four; at which time he always rose. Many of his friends at Leeds observed him to be more lively, both in preaching and conversation, a few days before his death, than ever. The last day of his valuable life he dined with a friend in Leeds, and felt a return of the gout in his stomach. When he came home to the preaching-house, where he resided, he was seized with a loss of sight, and violent retching, which ended in apoplexy, and removed him to glory."

THE LIFE

OF

MR. CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at Low-Coalburne, in the parish of Ryton, in the county of Durham, on the 25th of December, 1722. Moses Hopper, my father, was a farmer; my mother, whose name was Ann, was daughter to George Barkiss, farmer, in the same county. They were both of good repute, and much attached to the Church of England, but strangers to vital religion.

My mother had nine children,—six sons and three daughters,—of whom I was the youngest. When I was about five years old, I was sent to school to one Mr. Alderson, a man of piety and good understanding, who taught those under his care, not only the branches of learning he professed, but the fear of God, and the first principles of religion. He catechised us twice every week, and made us attend the church every Lord's day, and all holidays appointed for public service. After I had learned to read, write, and understand a little of the mathematics, I lost my beloved master, who made a most awful exit. He had been, as I thought, more devout one week

than common. The Sabbath following he received the sacrament at Ryton church. Some days after, a few gentlemen, with fair words, persuaded him to play a civil game at cards; but afterwards he fell into great distress of mind, and could not properly attend his school, which was often left to the care of his eldest son and me. The spring following, after many sore conflicts, he sunk into deep despair, and then drowned himself.

This melancholy event made my heart tremble, and was a means of bringing some serious thoughts into my mind about heaven, hell, death, and judgment. I began to distinguish between vice and virtue, the godly and ungodly men. These impressions remained till I took a severe illness, which continued near two years, and reduced me to a mere skeleton. Mr. Foster, an eminent apothecary, who attended me, pronounced me incurable.

This alarmed me, and filled my heart with slavish fear. I judged it was high time to prepare for a future state; and, according to the light I had, began the business without delay. I read my Bible with much pleasure, prayer, and attention: the more I read it, the more I loved it. Many verses, and some favourite chapters which I understood best, made such a deep impression upon me that I soon had them by heart. The "Practice of Piety," "A Form of Prayers," and a "Psalm Book," were my library. I prayed and sung with fear, and some degree of joy. I had very slight notions of my depraved nature, and the sin of unbelief; but clear views of my actual transgressions. I had been addicted to swear when I was put out of humour; and to lie when I could gain anything by it, or cover or excuse a fault. I had been apt to pilfer

among the children when I could do it with a good grace.

I was very proud, and prone to anger; yea, of a cruel disposition. I took a diabolical pleasure in hanging dogs, worrying cats, and killing birds and insects, mangling and cutting them to pieces. One instance of my inhumanity I perfectly remember to this day: One evening, as I was returning from school with some of my friendly associates, we found a great number of frogs collected together in a marshy place; we proclaimed war against them; we armed ourselves with stones, and, with all the fury of little fiends, murdered the poor, innocent, defenceless creatures. We then left the field in great triumph; but God soon requited me. That night I dreamed I fell into a deep place full of frogs, and they seized on me from head to foot, and begun to eat the flesh off my bones. I was in great terror, and found exquisite pain until I awoke, sweating and trembling, and half dead with fear.

About this time my dear father died of a consumption: I hope, a true penitent. He was interred at Ryton church, with great solemnity, among his ancestors. I was then left to the care of my indulgent mother and brethren. Soon after my father's death, my eldest brother married; and they divided my father's farm, and the goods and chattels he left, amongst them: but I was neglected and overlooked, like one that did not belong to the family; but this did not give me the least concern. My disorder still continued with my convictions. I prayed, wept, and looked towards the hill of Sion. I found comfort, and a good hope through grace. I waited every day for my final dissolution, and longed to be with Christ. I loved God, the Redeemer, and all

mankind. I was happy. After some time, it pleased God to restore me to perfect health, beyond all human expectation. After my recovery, my mind was quickly drawn after the world again. I saw transitory objects in another point of view than I had done during the time of my illness. My love to God and religion, and my desires after another world, soon grew very cold. I quenched the Holy Spirit, who departed, and left me again to the folly of my own heart.

As I was the youngest child of the family, and had nothing left me, I judged it would be proper to think of some business to procure bread; and my mother and brother being willing to put me to the grammar-school, and give me a good education, I accepted the offer, and concluded it was the best thing I could do; but, in the interim, one Mr. Armstrong, a shop-keeper, wanted a boy, and sent for me. I embraced the opportunity, and prepared to go without delay. I thought I should escape the wearisome task of study, having nothing to do but to improve the learning I had already to qualify me for a merchant's apprentice. My mother accompanied me to Mr. Armstrong's, and put me in possession of my new place. I went with great pleasure, and met with a kind reception. After I had been some time on trial, I was to be bound by indenture for seven years. This put my youthful mind into a new chain of reasoning. I thought I would never be bound to stand so long behind a counter: therefore, in spite of all persuasion, I left my place, and returned home.

After this, a project entered into my head that I would be a musician. I told my brother; he approved of it, bought me a violin, and provided me

a master. I began with great assiduity, and concluded I had found the very thing that would make me happy. I played away all my convictions, lost my taste for spiritual things, and banished all thoughts of a future world. I now employed myself in doing some little things in the house and about the farm ; and all the time I had to spare I spent in playing, singing, dancing, fishing, fowling, and whatever came next to my hand. I was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age, and began to think of some employment whereby I might have money to support my foolish desires. My brother kept wagon-horses. When the wagon-ways were first framed between the new coal-mines and the river Tyne, the farmers were under an obligation to their landlords to employ a certain number of horses for that purpose. I was a strong, active young man, and thought I could manage a wagon very well. My brother was willing I should make the trial, and gave me a proper horse for that service. I soon made a great proficiency in this slavish and dangerous occupation, and I was hugely pleased with my new department. Novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a throne or a dunghill. I frequently boasted of my strength, agility, and skill in this sphere of action ; and thought I was arrived at the summit of my preferment. I found it a singular pleasure, in whatever company I was, to talk of feeding and guiding wagon-horses ; of wagons and wagon-ways ; the nature and value of coals ; and concluded I only wanted a little money to make me a fitter or a London crimp. My vain mind was as much taken up with those things as the mathematicians with their abstruse science, or the philosophers with the wonders of nature. I followed this

business, and the various branches of agriculture, for about five years. During this period of my life I was given up to folly. I greedily pursued, according to my ability, all the pleasures of the world. I spent nights and days together in hunting, cocking, card-playing, horse-races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country; and, O grief of heart! gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics, and peasants made up the crowd. But in the enjoyment of these poor toys, I had many severe checks and sorrowful moments. The universe appeared as a vault, wherein true comfort was entombed; and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. I often said in my cool intervals, "Hath the great God of love provided no better things than these for His reasonable creatures?" Now, at this time I was my own master, and lived without control. I followed my former pleasures, but with a trembling hand. I found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly objects empty and vain.

In this dull, melancholy round I dragged on for some time, without any real comfort or solid satisfaction. I was not happy; yet I believed there was something that could make me so, but I knew not what it was, or where to find it. Sometimes I reflected on what I felt in my affliction when I was a youth; but it appeared as a dream. I was frequently in great and imminent danger; but through the interposition of a kind, unerring Providence, I escaped ten thousand snares and deaths, by night and day, at home and abroad. One evening in particular, two of my companions and I were riding home in a wagon very jovially, and as we were passing over a very high battery, the horse started suddenly to one side, and snatched the wagon from

the planks : immediately it overset, and turned over and over to the bottom of the hill. The trembling spectators who beheld this awful event concluded, with shrieks and cries, "They are all killed ; their bones are broken in a thousand pieces." But, to their great astonishment, and our unspeakable comfort, we were very little hurt.

After I had recovered my reason, and found I was alive and out of hell, my stubborn heart yielded to my Almighty Deliverer. I feared His great name, wept for joy, and was overwhelmed with grief for my folly. This deliverance wrought a deep conviction in my heart. The true light shined on my dark soul, and God laid me in the dust. I only wanted a spiritual guide to show me the way ; but, alas ! I could not find him in the country.

In May, 1742, we heard a strange report of one Wesley, a Church clergyman, that had been at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and had preached in Sandgate to many thousands, who heard him with astonishment. This new thing made a huge noise. The populace entertained various conjectures about him ; but few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in a great consternation. Some time after, his brother Charles came, and preached at Tanfield Cross. I ran with the multitude to hear this strange preacher : when I saw a man in a clergyman's habit, preaching at a public cross to a large auditory, some gaping, some laughing, and some weeping, I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded, some said, "He is a good man, and is sent to reform our land ;" others said, "Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts." I

said, "If he is a good man, good will be done, and it is plain we want a reformation; but if he is an impostor, he can only leave us as he found us, that is, without hope and without God in the world." I cannot tell what induced me to go so far; but I found I was in danger of being called a Methodist, and was glad to dismiss the conversation with a smile and a piece of drollery.

In November Mr. Wesley returned to Newcastle, formed a religious society, and laid the foundation of the Orphan House. At the same time, he visited Tanfield-Leigh, Wickham, Swalwell, and Horsley. His name was then well known in town and country.

All mouths were filled with Wesley and his followers; some for and many against them. I knew very little of the matter, but thought it was most prudent to join the general voice against this "new way."

The spring following, 1743, John Brown, a plain farmer, removed from Tanfield-Leigh to the Low-Spenn, and invited Mr. Wesley to his house. I then heard occasionally those preachers, who, I thought, could tell their story well, without stammering; but still found much fault with this strange method of proceeding. At this time there was a great clamour about religion among all sects and parties, and I made a bustle among the rest. I said, "I will read my Bible, say my prayers, go to my own parish-church, reform my life, and be good and pious, without the scandal of the cross." Alas! I did not consider, "No cross, no crown."

I hobbled on in this lame, ignorant manner, till at last I became deeply serious. I saw there was more in religion than I enjoyed or understood. I saw that God had been striving with me from my infant days. I looked back with astonishment on His loud calls,

compassionate helps, tender mercies, and great deliverances. He had raised me from the gates of death, when all human help failed. He had saved me from perils and dangers by night and by day. He had richly provided for me when I was left to myself very young. A sight of these favours raised in my cold heart some sensations of gratitude to my bountiful Benefactor. I said in my heart, "Shall I still trifle with the Almighty God of heaven and earth? Shall I fly in the face of my infinite Creator? Shall I play with eternal things? Will God always strive with the children of men? My few days are passing away like a shadow; pale death is approaching; the Judge is standing at the door; eternity, eternity, is come. Alas! I am not ready. I am in my sins, unholy, unhappy, and therefore not prepared to die. I will now cry to God for mercy. He willeth not the death of a sinner. It is His pleasure to save me from sin, and the punishment due to it. He waits to be gracious, that His great name may be exalted. 'He is good to all, and His mercy is over all His works.' I am a monument of His sparing goodness; I will therefore look up, and hope in His word. Behold, this is the accepted time; behold, this is the day of salvation. God hath sent His servants to show poor sinners the way of life." I was then determined to hear and judge for myself. God had now prepared my heart for the reception of the truth. I said, "I will no longer be led by the laughing multitude, nor be deluded with the noise of vain tongues."

The Sabbath-day following, Mr. Reeves preached at the Low-Spenn, at one o'clock in the afternoon. I heard him with great attention, but found a veil on my heart. I did not clearly see God's method of

justifying a guilty sinner through faith in the blood of His Son.

In the evening he preached again, on these words, "And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." In his plain, pathetic manner he gave us a definition of these principal graces, with their inseparable concomitants, and showed the unspeakable happiness of all those who had a saving faith, a good hope, and the love of God. The word came home to my heart with energy. The veil was removed. The true light shined upon me; and I said, "Alas! I am undone. If these things are true, and doubtless they are, I have only the faith of a devil, the hope of a hypocrite, and the love of this present evil world." My mouth was stopped. I stood guilty before God. He discovered to me the blessed plan of man's redemption through the blood of a crucified Saviour. I saw God had fulfilled His great original promise. He sent His Son to save sinners, the chief of sinners. He lived, suffered, and died for a lost world. "He tasted death for every man. He gave Himself a ransom for all." I said in my trouble, "The good Shepherd came from heaven to earth 'to seek and save that which was lost, to bring again that which was driven away, to bind up that which was broken, and to strengthen that which was sick.' But I am lost; I am driven to the mouth of hell, ready to drop into the flames; I am broken to pieces; I am sick of sin, sick of myself, and sick of a vain world: I will therefore look unto the Lord. My God will hear me; He hath died for me. I shall, yea, doubtless, I shall obtain mercy after all I have done. The God of truth hath promised mercy; the Son of His love hath procured mercy; the Spirit of truth is

ready to reveal mercy ; and the messengers of peace are come to proclaim mercy, free mercy, to every perishing sinner, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." I said, "I can, I will, I do believe in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. I am freely justified. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. God is now my God in Christ. The love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me. The spirit of bondage is gone. The Spirit of adoption is come. I can now cry, 'Abba, Father.' The same Spirit beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No enmity ; no wrath ; no curse ; no condemnation :—the ruined sinner is saved." I then found a glorious and undeniable change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to His yoke, to His cross, to His saints, and to His friends and enemies. I said, "This is Bible religion, scriptural Christianity : let men call it what they please,—'a delusion,' 'enthusiasm,' 'Methodism,' or 'Mahometanism,'—that is nothing to me ; hard names do not change the nature of the thing." I then went on my way rejoicing ; a wonder to my father's family, to all that knew me, and to myself. All my idols fell to the ground before the ark of God. I found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it.

The whole tenor of my life and conversation was new. Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love made the change. My heart, my tongue, my hands, were now, in my little way, employed for my loving God. I was no longer of the world ; therefore the world began immediately to hate me. Some said, "Ah !

what think you? Christopher Hopper is converted." Others said, "He hath received the Holy Ghost." Others said, "He is mad; keep far from him; come not near his habitation." Some, of a more compassionate turn, pitied me; but all agreed I had renounced my baptism, left the Church, and was in a dangerous situation.

Soon after Mr. Wesley came to Low-Spenn, formed a little society, and made me a leader, to help and watch over them. I was but a novice, a young, raw disciple, unskilled in the word of righteousness; but faith in Christ, and the love of God in my heart, overcame all the powers of darkness. I found unspeakable pleasure in doing and suffering the will of God. I laboured diligently with my hands; I owed no man anything; I had enough for myself, and a little to spare for others; I attended four or five meetings every week; we prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the Bible, and exhorted one another to fear and love God. The power of the Lord was present to heal; He owned His own work, and gave us prosperity. Many of my old companions were awakened; also my poor old mother, one of my sisters, and one of my brothers, who had been a champion in the devil's cause, but has been an ornament to religion from that time to this day.* The fire now kindled, and the flame spread. I had one invitation after another, to High-Spenn, Barlow, Woodside, Predhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places.

As yet, I had not examined my call to preach the Gospel, nor considered the consequences of such an undertaking. I was sweetly carried on with a strong prevailing influence, and a loving desire to promote

* He died in the Lord some years ago.

the glory of God. I saw the world dead in trespasses and sins, void of light, holiness, and happiness. I therefore thirsted after their salvation, and thought it my duty to promote it. God blessed His word. Sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. But the devil was highly displeased. He saw his kingdom was in danger, and immediately proclaimed war against me.

I met with great persecution, many discouragements, and much opposition in every place. Men of all ranks used their power and influence to stop this blessed work of God. They spoke all manner of evil against the work, and the instruments employed therein. They dispensed with two or three awakened clergymen tolerably well: these were regularly ordained, men of learning, gentlemen, and divines; but to see a ploughman, or an honest mechanic, stand up to preach the Gospel, it was insufferable. Hell was moved from beneath; a council was called; the edict came forth, and war commenced.

Laymen and ecclesiastics joined heart and hand to suppress these pestilent fellows; not with acts of kindness, Scripture, or reason; but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels: these were Satan's arguments in vindication of his own cause. It was the common cry in town and country, "Press them for soldiers; send them on board a man-of-war; transport them; beat them; stone them; send them to prison, or knock out their brains, and dispatch them at once; for there is no law for them." *

Several of my fellow-sufferers had shared honest

* This was a great mistake: there was law for us; but we could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force.

John Nelson's fate already; and I expected to be the next. They had their eyes on me; they daily pursued me as Saul did David; they waited for an opportunity to seize on the prey: but the hand of the Lord was with me; so I escaped. He delivered me by various means, at sundry times, and often in a very remarkable manner.

Once in particular, as I was preaching at Wickham, to a quiet, attentive congregation, the constable came with his attendants to apprehend me; they guarded the door, and stood with fierce impatience to seize me. When I had concluded, I stepped down, went through the midst of them, was conveyed through a window, and went quietly home, leaving the peace-officer and his gentlemen to end the dispute with loud words, hard blows, and bloody faces.

When I first set out to do all the good I could, without fee or reward, I did not foresee this violent storm. I began now to consider what latitude I was in; and whether it would not be a point of wisdom to tack about, and steer for some quiet harbour.

There had been many things said and written against this "new way;" especially against those illiterate preachers who so exceedingly disturbed the world. I found some doubts concerning my call to the work, and almost wished they might be well grounded, that I might with a good conscience desist from preaching.

I was therefore determined to examine myself, whether I had a right to preach, or whether I had rashly entered into a work that did not belong to me. One evening I went into a wood by the side of Derwent-water, much dejected. Clouds and darkness surrounded me, and my spirit was troubled within me. I said, "My enemies are too strong for

me; there are few on the Lord's side, but myriads against Him. What shall I do? Alas! 'My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.' 'I am a worm, and no man.' O my God, let me enjoy this sweet solitude, and see my friends and companions no more! Let me live as a hermit in this lonely desert, till my few days are ended: then shall my weary spirit be at rest."

I did not want ease, wealth, or honour, but to know, do, and suffer the will of my Lord and Master. I thought, "If I have made a mistake, God will forgive me, and I will take shame to myself. I will desist from preaching, and live and die a private Christian. But if God hath called me to publish the Gospel of His dear Son, I must bear a public testimony, and leave the event to Him."

In the midst of these reflections, it occurred to my mind, "What evidence is sufficient to satisfy me in this weighty matter? I only want a rational, scriptural evidence. Let me, then, inquire with prayer and fasting, what reason have I to believe that I am called to preach the Gospel?"

1. I have heard and believed the Gospel, and found it to be the power of God to the salvation of my own soul, (Rom. i. 16,) and I believe it to be the powerful means which God hath appointed to reclaim and save lost sinners. 2. I believe all power is given to Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth; therefore He alone hath power and authority to call, qualify, and thrust out labourers into His own harvest. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) Hence I learn that this power cannot be acquired by human art or learning, or purchased with gold or silver. (Acts viii. 20.) 3. I believe those who are called and put into this work by Him shall turn sinners from darkness to

light, and from the power of Satan to God. (Acts xxvi. 18.) 4. I have a rational conviction that God hath committed unto me the word of reconciliation. (2 Cor. v. 19.) I have this treasure in an earthen vessel, in a feeble, mortal body; (2 Cor. iv. 7;) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man. I find, by daily experience, "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." (2 Cor. iii. 5.) 5. According to this conviction I have preached the Gospel to sinners dead in sin, and they have been awakened and converted to God. Children of the devil are become children of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Having considered these things, I concluded my call to preach the Gospel was consistent with Scripture, reason, and experience. I was filled with joy: I said, "I have now the countenance of my God; the hands of His dear Son, the Bishop of my soul, laid upon me; the approbation of three presbyters sent by Him; the prayers of His dear people; the testimony of a good conscience, and the pleasure of seeing Sion prosper. I therefore pray earnestly that God may incline, persuade, and sweetly influence my heart, and open my mouth by His Holy Spirit, to dispense the word of truth to a world of perishing sinners. This I desire to do continually, in season and out of season, according to the ability He hath given me." My drooping spirit now revived. The fear of men and devils departed from me, and I set out with double courage. I could say, "Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, "Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy

voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." My heart replied, "For Sion's sake, I will not hold my peace; and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The Lord was with me night and day; His threatenings passed over me; His promises comforted me; and His precepts were my delight. I could say,

"To me, with Thy dear name, is given
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven."

In the year 1744 I taught a school at Barlow in the parish of Ryton. My time was employed six days in teaching the children under my care the branches of learning I professed, and the first principles of Christianity.

I spent every Sabbath, and all my vacant hours, in preaching, reading, praying, visiting the sick, and conversing with all that Providence put in my way. God was with me, and blessed my weak labours. Sinners were converted, believers multiplied, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour.

But Satan did not like this work: therefore he stirred up the rector of Ryton and his curate, with those under their influence, to prevent me. They gave me first hard words, and then hard blows.

In a little time I was summoned to appear in the Spiritual Court at Durham, to answer for my conduct. I did not know what I had done; but was soon informed that I was impeached for teaching a school without a licence; and, what was still worse, for calling sinners to repentance, and warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come,—an offence that cannot be overlooked by men who know not God! But God

raised me up friends, who stood by me, and defended my cause against all my adversaries.

After this troublesome affair was ended, I met with a trial of another kind. Before I was awakened I was deeply in love with one Jane Richardson, a farmer's daughter, and an agreeable young woman. She was my first love, and had laid fast hold on my youthful heart. She had every accomplishment I wanted, but religion! Alas! she was unacquainted with God. This was a bar indeed! I found a desire to break off all correspondence with her, but was afraid she could not bear it. I was greatly troubled, and prayed for Divine direction. God was pleased to hear and grant my request. She was soon awakened, and found peace with God. All objections being removed, on May the 28th, 1745, we were joined together in Ryton church. She was a loving wife, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made my joys and sorrows her own. We worshipped God in spirit and truth, and rejoiced in the Son of His love.

The same evening I preached at the Low-Spenn. The Lord was with us, and we praised His name together. We lived a few months with my wife's friends at the Smeals, near Derwent, in a most loving, agreeable manner. God made us of one heart and mind, and united our souls together by one spirit in humble love.

In the year 1746 I removed from Barlow to the preaching-house at Sheephill. I received the preachers and my other religious friends with much pleasure. My heart was open; my door was open; and my little table free for strangers. I gave up my soul, body, and substance to my adorable Saviour, and grieved I had no more to give.

I commonly preached, or met a class, every evening after I had dismissed my scholars. I preached twice or thrice, and often four times, every Sabbath-day. When I had a day or two to spare from my present vocation, I visited Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and many other towns and villages, ten, twenty, or thirty miles round. Herein I met with much opposition, and was frequently in great jeopardy. Indeed, I did not much regard a little dirt, a few rotten eggs, the sound of a cow's horn, the noise of bells, or a few snowballs in their season; but sometimes I was saluted with blows, stones, brickbats, and bludgeons. These I did not well like: they were not pleasing to flesh and blood.

I sometimes lost a little skin, and once* a little blood, which was drawn from my forehead with a sharp stone. I wore a patch a few days, and was not ashamed; I gloried in the cross. And when my small sufferings abounded for the sake of Christ, my comfort abounded much more. I never was more happy in my own soul, or more blessed in my labours.

The latter end of July, 1747, I had a call to visit Cornwood, and met with a kind reception. I preached several times among the people called Quakers. I hope good was done.

On my return, I had an invitation to preach at Allendale-town. A great congregation attended, who behaved well, and heard the word gladly. The latter end of December I visited Allendale again. A glorious work broke out. The Lord stretched out His hand to save sinners. Mr. Topping, minister of that place, used all his art, power, and influence to

* It was at Sunderland, in the midst of an outrageous mob of sailors.

stop it; but he could do nothing. His strength was perfect weakness against the Lord.

I went from town to town, and from house to house, singing, praying, and preaching the word; and great multitudes followed from place to place, weeping, and seeking Him that was crucified. Great numbers were awakened, and found peace with God, through the blood of the Lamb. I have frequently seen a whole congregation melted into tears, and bowed down before the Lord, as the heart of one man: especially once, when I was preaching in Mr. Lowe's old barn, at Dod-bank, the Lord manifested His great power. He wrought for the glory of His own name; and I stood still and looked on, with loving fear and wonder.

In the year 1748 I gave up my school at Sheep-hill, and everything that was comfortable and convenient, and removed to Hindley-hill, in Allendale. I lodged with honest James Broadwood, and was as one of his family. The presence of the Lord dwelt in his house, and we lived in peace and unity. I formed a society at Hindley-hill, another at West-allen; one at Alesdon, and one at Ninthead. The Lord was among them of a truth. I had now work enough, and God's blessing on my labour. In the latter end of this year I visited Weardale. Some of the brethren attended me from Allendale.

It was in a storm of snow that we crossed the quagmires and enormous mountains. When we came into the Dales, we met with a very cold reception. The enemy had barricaded the place, and made his bulwarks strong. But the Lord made way for His truth. He opened the heart of a poor Scotch shepherd to receive us into his little thatched cabin, where we lodged all night.

The next day I preached under the walls of an old castle. A few children and two or three old women attended, who looked hard at us. When I had done, we followed them into their houses, and talked freely to them in their own language, about the kingdom of God. They heard, and obeyed the Gospel. The next evening I had a large congregation, who heard with much attention, and received the word gladly. Some time after, I preached in private houses, ale-houses, cock-pits, or wherever I could find a door open. The fire then spread from heart to heart, and God was glorified.

This was the beginning of a good work in Wear-dale, which has continued and increased to this day.

The spring following, in the year 1749, I began teaching a school near Hindley-hill. But the work of God so increased in my hands, that I could not properly attend it: therefore, in the latter end of the year, I gave it up, with all other secular employments, and cast myself on the bounty of my Lord and Master.

My little substance soon failed, and I saw nothing before me but beggary and great afflictions. Sometimes I was carried above all earthly objects, and had a comfortable view of the heavenly country. At other times I was much depressed, and could see nothing but poverty and distress.

I well remember, once on the top of a cold mountain in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me, and pushed me hard to return to my school, or some other business to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter. But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to

my heart like lightning: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing, Lord." (Luke xxii. 35.) I answered with a loud voice, "Nothing, Lord! nothing, Lord!" All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing!

"Constrain'd to cry by love Divine,
My God, Thou art for ever mine!"

Since that time I have been richly supplied with all good things. This day I am full. I have all, and abound. Praise God and the Lamb for ever!

The work now begun to spread in the Dales, Hexhamshire, North-Tyne, and soon reached Whitehaven.

And now God raised up many preachers; men, eminent both for gifts and graces. Some of them continued to be local, and some became itinerant, preachers. The latter end of the year 1749* I left the Dales, and the dear children God had given me. I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends, with melting hearts and many tears.

In those days we had no provision made for preachers' wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home.

I then set out for Bristol. I called at Chester, Durham, Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough, and found the Lord in every place. I spent a few days at Leeds. Here God opened my mouth to speak His word, and I hope good was done.

I preached at Birstal, on the top of the hill, before

* From this period, I shall only give a short sketch of my travels, and now and then mention a small incident.

the foundation of the preaching-house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax, and found their little society at Skircoat-green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode to Rochdale, and preached in the evening at the widow Whitaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough: but we were not afraid; for God was with us. Next day I rode to Manchester, and preached that evening in a little garret by the river side.* The congregation multiplied every meeting. On the Sabbath-day the old place would not contain them. The multitude was impatient to hear. The old wooden house shook under us, and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled, and some believed. The next evening they procured me a Baptist meeting-house. The place was crowded. They heard with attention. Many were awakened, and joined themselves to seek and worship God. They immediately bought a piece of ground, and laid the foundation of their first preaching-house. I rode through Cheshire, and joined a society at Alphraham, and another at Pool. It was an humbling time among the opulent farmers; the murrain raging amongst their cattle. They buried them in the open fields. Their graves were a solemn scene. The hand of the Lord was on the land. I visited the suburbs of Chester. God begun a good work then, which has increased and continued to this day. I preached at Birmingham, Evesham, Stroud, and Kingswood; and then rode to Bristol, where I spent a few days, and I hope not in vain.

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March 20th, 1750.—I set out with Mr. Wesley for Ireland. We crossed the New Passage into Wales, and reached Cardiff before night.

21st.—We rode to Brecknock through heavy rain. Mr. Wesley's mare fell twice, and threw him over her head; but without any hurt to man or beast.

22d.—We rode to Builth. A congregation waited for Howell Harris, but he did not come at the time appointed; so, at their request, Mr. Wesley preached. I then spoke a few words. It was a time of love. The Welsh brethren rejoiced in the Lord. We then rode to Machynlleth, and then to Dolgelly, wet and weary enough.

24th.—We rode to Tan-y-bwlch. It rained incessantly all the way. Our horses were tired, and we were ready to faint; but God was our strength, and we rejoiced in our little toil.

25th.—We rode to Baldon-ferry. Mr. Jenkin Morgan came to the water-side, crossed over with us into the isle of Anglesey, and then conducted us to his house, half-way between the ferry and Holyhead.

Sunday, 26th.—Mr. Wesley preached at Howell Thomas's, in Trevorllwyd parish; in the afternoon, at William Pritchard's. The people understood no English; but their looks, sighs, and gestures showed God was speaking to their hearts.

We then went to lodge with one Mr. Holiday, an exciseman, who lived in a quiet, solitary place, where no human voice was heard, but those of the family.

Wednesday, 29th.—We rode to Holyhead, and sent back our horses with John Jane, who had travelled from Bristol to the Head with three shillings, and had one penny left. About eleven o'clock, we went on board. As soon as we sailed,

we had wind and rain enough without, and a violent storm in the ship. Mr. Griffith, of Caernarvonshire, a clumsy, hard-faced man, saluted us with a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy; but God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded.

Thursday, 30th.—We wrought our way four leagues towards Ireland, but we were driven back in the afternoon to the mouth of the harbour. The wind then shifted two points, and we ventured out again. By midnight we were got half-way over; but the wind, turning full against us, and blowing hard, soon brought us back into the bay again. Mr. Wesley preached that evening on the history of Dives and Lazarus, to a room full of men decked with gold and silver; but they were soon satisfied with it, and went away murmuring. After they were gone, we had a comfortable meeting with a few plain Welshmen.

Saturday, 31st.—We were determined to wait one week longer, if the wind did not serve before. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening. Captain Griffith, with his dear gentlemen, made noise enough; but our God delivered us.

April 1st.—We returned to Mr. Holiday's, called at William Pritchard's, then went to Llanerell Ymadd; but the sons of Belial would not suffer us to enter the place.

Thursday, 5th.—Mr. Wesley preached near the town to a few precious souls, who heard and obeyed the word.

Friday, 6th.—The wind came fair; so we rode to Holyhead early in the morning, embarked with a fair wind, and, in the evening, landed at Dublin. I spent a few days in that city, and, I hope, not in vain. I then visited Portarlinton, Edinderry,

Mountmellick, Tyrrel's-pass, Athlone, Birr, and Aghrim, and found the Lord was with me in every place. I had great crosses, but greater comforts. I then rode to Dublin, and spent a few days there with much satisfaction.

July 22d.—I embarked with Mr. Wesley for England. We sailed about ten in the morning, and in the afternoon came to an anchor.

Monday, 23d.—We had a vehement squall of wind, thunder, and lightning between the Welsh sands and the rocky shore of Lundy. We cried to the Lord in our trouble, and He delivered us out of our distress.

Tuesday, 24th.—The wind was contrary. It blew a storm. The seas ran mountain-high. We were tossed in a narrow channel, full of shoals, rocks, and sands. We prayed for help: our God heard, and brought us safe to Pill.

The next day I came to Bristol, where I spent a few days with pleasure, and then set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I visited the societies in my way, and they refreshed me in the love of Jesus.

I spent a few weeks at and about Newcastle. My dear friends were glad to see me. We rejoiced together. I then set out for Whitehaven, where I had a good season. The Lord crowned my weak labours with success. About the latter end of the year I left Whitehaven, rode to Cockermouth, then to Penrith, and the next day came to Hindley-hill. I took a fever in my journey; but rode on to Newlands, where I took my bed. My dear wife met me with joy and grief. She soon caught the disorder, and we continued sick for many weeks.

We lodged with Mr. George Hunter, a friendly man. God richly provided all things for us. He

blessed us in our sickness, and restored us to health. Praised be His name for ever !

In the spring, 1751, I set out for Bristol. I met with honest John Nelson at Leeds. We rode on together with some other preachers. We spoke freely to all that Providence put in our way; and God blessed our labours. We rode through heavy rains, and rapid floods; but the Lord preserved both man and beast, and brought us to our journey's end in peace.

Monday, March 11th.—Our Conference began at Bristol. The more we conversed, the more our love increased to God and one another. We kept to our first doctrines, and were of one heart and one mind.

I then returned to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, visiting the brethren in my way. I preached every evening at seven, and every morning at five o'clock, and often at noon-day, the common work of a Methodist preacher.

Monday, April 22d.—I set out with Mr. Wesley for Scotland. We rode to Alnwick. Our friends received us with joy. We praised God together.

Wednesday, 23d.—We rode to Berwick. Mr. Wesley preached at a young man's funeral, who had been cut off suddenly. It was a solemn time. Many heard for eternity.

Thursday, 24th.—We rode to Old-Camus, through a Scotch mist. We rode past Preston-field, saw the place of battle, and Colonel Gardiner's house. Here that good man, and brave soldier, fought and died for his king and country. We then rode on to Musselborough, where Mr. Wesley preached in a large school to a company of wise men, so called.

Friday, 20th.—We rode back to Berwick. I left Mr. Wesley, and the week following returned to Musselborough, where I spent a few days. I

preached night and morning to a large congregation, who heard with great attention. This was the beginning of a good work in Scotland. Some years after, I preached at Edinburgh, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee, and Aberdeen. God blessed His word, and raised up witnesses to testify that He had sent us to the North Britons also.

In 1752 I set out, with my wife, for Whitehaven, where I spent a few days with pleasure and profit to myself and others. We then embarked for Ireland; and, after a tedious voyage, landed at Dublin. I spent a few weeks in that city, and then rode to Cork, where I spent the winter with joy and sorrow. We had warm work in that city for a long time; but the word of the Lord prevailed, and silenced the enemy.

In the spring I returned to Dublin, and met my wife and friends, who had just escaped the fire of a very hot persecution. This year I had many blessings and crosses, both by sea and land.

“I'll praise my God with every breath :
O let me die to see Thy day !
Now snatch me from this life of death :
O come, my Saviour, come away !”

In the year 1753 I left Dublin, and embarked for England. We landed at Whitehaven. I first visited the Dales, then rode to Newcastle; and the Lord was with us of a truth.

In the year 1754 I embarked at North-Shields for London. May 22d, our Conference began. It was a time of love.

In June I embarked for Newcastle. I had a quick and pleasant passage. I preached to the ship's company, who heard the word with joy. I landed at Shields, and then came to the Orphan-House, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where we praised God and the

Lamb, with one heart and voice, for mercies we had received.

May 9th, 1755.—Our Conference began at Leeds. The first question was, Whether we ought to separate from the Church of England. After many deep and serious conversations, we concluded that it was not *expedient* for many reasons.

I then set out again for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As I was passing through Chapeltown, I got a dreadful fall from my horse. My foot was much hurt, but all my bones were preserved. Glory be to God and the Lamb! I rode with much pain to Newcastle, but enjoyed great peace and a calm resignation to the Divine will. This I believe was a gracious dispensation, and was sent to humble me, and prepare me for a greater trial.

August 15th.—My dear wife took a fever. She had great pain, and heavy affliction for about ten days, together with many violent temptations. But she enjoyed perfect peace, and was fully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. At last she triumphed over death, and without a doubt, a sigh, or a groan, breathed out her happy soul into the arms of her adorable Redeemer!

On the 28th Mr. Massiot preached her funeral sermon to a very large congregation of true mourners. The same evening she was interred, amongst her ancestors, in Ryton church. She was an agreeable, affectionate wife, a constant friend, and a pious, humble Christian. She is now in paradise, and I am left to mourn.

“ O may our heart and mind
Continually ascend,
That haven of repose to find
Where all our labours end;

Where all our grief is o'er,
Our sufferings and our pain :
Who meet on that eternal shore
Shall never part again."

In July, 1756, I set out for Bristol. Our Conference began August 26th. It was a good season.

September 15th.—I once more embarked for Ireland, with Mr. Murlin, Olivers, Gilbert, and Massiot. On the 19th we were within sight of land, and, being well satisfied with a tedious and dangerous passage, we left the ship, and got into a fishing-boat ; and, after rowing very hard for some hours, landed at Robertson's Cove, about twenty miles from Cork. We were poor strangers now in a strange land, among a people of a strange language ! There was not one inn or private house in the little village that could give us a night's lodging. It was a gloomy time. The day was gone, and we stood looking one at another, like a company of poor prisoners. In these circumstances God sent us an honest farmer, who was a Papist ; and he took us home to his house in the country, and showed us great kindness. We lodged that night in the midst of our enemies ; but the Lord suffered no man to hurt us. The next morning our kind host provided us horses, and sent a servant to conduct us safe to Cork.

Here we met with a kind reception. Our friends rejoiced with us, and praised God for all our deliverances. I lodged with old Mr. Massiot, who kept a house too well provided for pilgrims. I spent a few days in that city, preached night and morning, and visited the brethren from house to house. I hope good was done.

I then set out for Dublin, where I spent my winter with pleasure and profit.

The spring following I returned to Cork, where I spent about two months. I found much satisfaction, but not without temptations. I met with reproaches and many cruel mockings; but found that Spirit resting upon me, which gave me victory over reproach and shame.

I then rode to Limerick, where I spent a few weeks. I met with some severe trials in that city; but God delivered me. I then set out for Dublin. I found my body and mind very weak, yet not without many kind visits from my Lord.

In autumn I took a sore fever. Doctor Rutty, that venerable and wise physician, attended me faithfully, without fee or reward. He thought my labours under the sun were ended. I bade farewell to the world. I was kept in perfect peace, patient and resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. I had comfortable and clear views of paradise, and a world of happy spirits. When to all appearance I was just on the brink of eternity, I fell into a sweet rest, and dreamed I was dead, and saw all things prepared for my funeral, and that my spirit was with Christ, in a state of unspeakable happiness; but was sent back again to call a few more sinners to repentance.

I then awoke, my fever was gone, and from that moment I began to recover. My strength of body soon returned, and the Lord sent me forth with a fresh commission.

I laboured in Ireland till July, 1758, and then embarked for England, with Mr. Johnson, Greenwood, and Gilbert. We had a fine gale, and soon landed at Parkgate. I then rode to Bristol. Our Conference began August 10th. It was a good season. God crowned our meeting with love and unanimity.

The latter end of September I arrived once more

at the Orphan-House, without Pilgrim-street-gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. My good old friends were glad to see me, and received me as one raised from the dead.

In the latter end of this year I had some thoughts of changing my life again. I prayed for Divine direction, and took the advice of some of my dear friends. One who loved me, and wished me well, recommended to me an agreeable person of a fair character; and on April 17th, 1759, we were married at St. Andrew's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. God made His face to shine upon us, and blessed us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all spiritual and temporal blessings. This was a day of prosperity: therefore I thought it a day of great danger.

I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle; but not to leave my Master's work. I began a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world; but my Lord would not suffer me. He showed me that His good work would bring me far more gain in the end than all the shops in Newcastle. So I set out for the north, and preached at Placey, Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick, Dundee, Musselborough, Leith, New and Old Aberdeen, and Peterhead; and then returned to Newcastle the same way.

I then set out for the London Conference, visited Canterbury and Dover, returned to London, and then rode back to Newcastle. In all those journeys I found the Lord was with me, and gave His word success.

In the year 1760 I again visited Scotland. The

work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Sinners were converted, mourners comforted, and saints built up in their most holy faith. We had now a fair prospect of a great harvest in North Britain, till men of corrupt minds stirred up the spirit of vain controversy : we then spent our time and strength about the meaning of words, instead of promoting the fear and love of God. My soul was troubled, and my spirit grieved within me, to see so many precious souls turned out of the way of holiness and happiness, by noisy disputes and foolish jangling. These men will blush in the last day who have done this great evil. Let me live with men of peace, who love God and the brethren, and enjoy the life of religion in their own souls.

April 28th, 1761.—Mr. Wesley came to Edinburgh, and the Lord gave His word success. Sinners heard with attention, and the saints rejoiced in God their Saviour.

I visited Dundee and Aberdeen, returned to Edinburgh, and from thence to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where God blessed His own word. I then set out with Mr. Wesley and several of the brethren for Durham. Mr. Wesley preached in a green field, by the river-side, to a very large auditory. One poor man was favoured with a stone, and lost a little blood ; but in the general they behaved tolerably well. I preached in the evening, in the same field, to a large congregation. A gentleman, so called, employed a base man to strip himself naked, and swim through the river to disturb the hearers ; but a good woman soon hissed him off the stage ; so he was glad to return by the way he came, with much disgrace. Mr. John Greenwood informed me afterwards, that the very gentleman who encouraged the

poor wretch above mentioned was some time after found drowned in the same river! O God, Thy judgments are unsearchable, and Thy ways past finding out!

In August I left Newcastle, and set out with my wife for London. It was a disagreeable journey, but God blessed and preserved us from all evil. September 1st our Conference began. Thence we set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I spent my winter.

The latter end of July, 1762, we left Newcastle, and set out for Leeds. August 9th, our Conference began. I was stationed in that Circuit.

In July, 1763, I set out for London. Our Conference began and ended in love. I then set out for Scotland. I spent my winter in Edinburgh, Dunbar, and Berwick. We lived in a little dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old black walls, disagreeable enough: but we had a good season; many poor sinners were converted to God. We saw the fruit of our labours, and rejoiced. My dear Edinburgh friends were very kind, especially Lady Gardiner, that good old saint, who is now with Jesus in paradise. Praise God for all His mercies!

In the year 1764 I continued labouring in Scotland. On June 1st I set out with Mr. Wesley and my wife for Aberdeen. We had a pleasant and profitable journey. This summer we laid the foundation of our octagon at Aberdeen. The Lord gave me success. Many precious souls were awakened, and added to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are enrolled in heaven.

November 13th.—We set out for Edinburgh, and rode to Dundee. The 15th we rode to Kinghorn, and the next morning crossed the Firth, and took

the stage to Edinburgh. Our friends received us with joy, and we praised God together.

In the year 1765 we laid the foundation of our octagon at Edinburgh. I met with much opposition and many discouragements. But the Lord was on my side, and helped me. I collected all I could, gave all I could spare, and borrowed above three hundred pounds to carry on and complete that building.

I preached on the foundation one Sabbath-day to a large congregation. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and many rejoiced to see that day. I preached every Lord's day on the Calton-hill, a large Golgotha, a place of a skull! By preaching so often in the cold air to very large auditories, with other difficulties and hard labours, I laid the foundation of a very dangerous disorder in my bowels, which baffled all the skill of physicians, and the virtue of medicine, for more than three years. But I could say,—

“ Let sickness blast, and death devour,
If heaven will recompense our pains :
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
Since firm the word of God remains.”

In July I set out for England. I spent a few days at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and then rode to Manchester. Our Conference began the 20th of August, and ended the 23d : God refreshed us. I visited the brethren, and then set out for the north.

In October, Mr. Alexander Coates died at the Orphan-House, in perfect peace. I saw him fall asleep in the arms of our adorable Saviour without a doubt. Farewell, my brother, for a season ! But we shall meet again to part no more.

In the year 1766 I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, but was very much indisposed. I was just worn out ; my bodily strength failed. I was on the verge of eternity. But, blessed be God, I enjoyed great tranquillity of mind, and very good spirits.

“ Accepting my pain,
I no longer complain,
But wait till at last I the haven obtain.

“ Till the storms are all o’er,
And, afflicted no more,
On a plank of the ship I escape to the shore.”

February 20th.—That old saint, Henry Jackson, died full of love, being ninety-nine years and five months old. Let me die his death !

August 12th.—Our Conference began at Leeds. We enjoyed a solemn sense of the presence of God. We met and parted in love. I then rode to Newcastle, and spent a few months in that Circuit. My disorder continued ; but I could say, “ When I am weak, then I am strong.”

In July, 1767, I set out for London. God was with me, and gave me a will and power to preach His word. August 18th our Conference began. Dear Mr. Whitefield and honest Howell Harris attended. All was love, all was harmony. It was a Pentecost indeed !

In the beginning of September, 1768, I left Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstal, in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey’s end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome ; our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together.

On Tuesday, August 1st, 1769, our Conference

began at Leeds. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and made us of one mind and judgment.

In the latter end of July, 1770, I rode to London. Our Conference began August the 7th. The Lord presided over us, and made it a time of love. I then set out for Birstal, where I had laboured two years with great satisfaction, and I hope with some success.

August 26th.—I took my leave of my dear Birstal friends, and rode with my wife to Bradford, in Yorkshire. We met with a loving reception. I laboured this year with much comfort. I hope good was done.

In the year 1771 the Calvinists proclaimed open war against the Remonstrants. In August several of them met at our Conference in Bristol: but their strength failed; they could do nothing; for truth is great, and will prevail.

The two following years I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, among my dear friends and countrymen, whom I love for the truth's sake. Great things hath the Lord done in that part of His vineyard.

In the year 1774 I was appointed at the Bristol Conference for Liverpool Circuit. I took my leave of my dear Newcastle friends with much reluctancy, and set out with my wife for Lancashire. September 26th we reached Bolton-in-the-Moors, where we met with a friendly reception. We lodged with honest George Eskrick. The presence of the Lord dwelt with us, and we enjoyed great peace.

In the year 1775 I removed to Liverpool, where I spent a few months with pleasure and profit. I found much love both to the place and people: they bore with my bodily weakness, and refreshed me in the Lord.

In July, 1776, I left Bolton, and set out for London. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. The shout of a King was in the midst of us, and we praised God together for all that He had done. I spent a few days in that great city; preached the word, visited a few dear Christian friends, and then set out for Manchester.

November 7th.—I set out once more for Ireland. The 8th I reached Conway; the 9th, Holyhead; the 10th I embarked, and, after a dangerous passage, landed that evening in Dublin. I preached every evening at Wood-street to a large auditory. God blessed His word, and gave me success. I visited a few poor backsliders, who were glad to see the face of an old friend. May God restore them for Christ's sake! Monday, the 24th, I embarked for England.—25th, landed at the Head, and took the stage to Conway.—26th, I came to Chester, and the 28th to Manchester; where my wife and friends received me with great joy. We praised God for trials and blessings.

In the latter end of July, 1777, I set out for Bristol. I visited the principal societies in my way, and God gave me strength of body and peace of mind. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. We had a good season: love to God and man crowned our meeting. I then rode to Manchester, and spent a few days with my old friends. I published the word of salvation in Salford, on the Sabbath-day, to a large congregation. Some of our mistaken Churchmen presented the fire-engine; but their strength failed, they could do nothing. This vain attempt seemed to be the last effort of a conquered enemy. I then set out for Bradford in Yorkshire, where I spent an agreeable year with Mr.

Benson and my dear friends. I hope our weak labours were made a blessing to many.

In the year 1778 our Conference began at Leeds, the first Tuesday in August. I was stationed another year, with Mr. Murlin and Johnson, in Bradford Circuit. We laboured together in love; God was with us, and gave us success.

In the year 1779 I was appointed, at our London Conference, for Colne Circuit, in Lancashire.

August 25th.—I took my leave of our dear friends at Bradford, and set out with my wife for Colne. I met with many agreeable and some disagreeable things. The grand enemy had wounded many, who, I hope, are now healed again. We had a severe winter, many crosses and trials, and many blessings. The Lord owned our weak labours, and gave us a little success. The last time I visited the classes in this Circuit, we added thirty-eight to our number, and twenty-three to the church of the living God, who had found remission of sins through the blood of our adorable Saviour. Nine died in peace, and are now with the spirits of just men made perfect in the paradise of God.

I can say but little about the controversy between the Calvinian brethren and the Arminians. I believe Christ tasted death for every man: but I do not love contention; I am no disputant; I therefore leave polemical divinity to men of learning, abilities, and experience. I can only say, I have been greatly humbled for my sin. I know in whom I have believed. I know God is love. I know it by experience. He hath loved me, and given His Son for me. I have peace with God, through faith in the blood of Christ. I am at peace with all the saints, with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I desire

to follow after peace with all men. I hate sin, and by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ, and I pursue it. By all means I follow on, if I may apprehend that for which I was also apprehended of Christ Jesus. I aim at, wish, and pray for, all that grace, glory, and immortality promised by the Father, and procured by the Son of His love. This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity; and this religion I call mine.

This I desire to recommend to all men, by preaching His word in the pulpit, in the house, and in the way; in season and out of season, according to my ability.

Without this religion, all names, notions, and forms, among all sects and parties, are but mere parade and idle show. Without repentance, without faith in the blood of Christ, without holiness of heart and life, without love to God and man, all is nothing. Let all men consider this well, and pray for, and seek after, this one thing needful, that they may be saved from sin in this life, and from hell in the great day of the Lord Jesus!

January 5th, 1780.—I preached at Colne on old Christmas-day, my birth-day. What is time?—"Dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade."—Lord, help me to embrace the present moment!

23d.—I met with a perfect hurricane at Bacup. I was shut up with mountains of snow with a poor old woman, till the 27th, with little fire and small provisions; but God was with us. The same day I set out with James Dawson and John Earnshaw, over the hills, to Colne, well in body, and in perfect peace of mind.

April 2d.—I rode from Preston to Bolton, to meet

Mr. Wesley. We had a good season ; the Lord was with us of a truth, and great was our joy.

July 16th.—I set out for Bristol, visited the societies in my way, preached the word, and was refreshed. Praise the Lord !

Our Conference began on Tuesday, August 1st, and concluded on the 9th. Our brethren made me president in Mr. Wesley's absence. A poor helpless worm ! Superintendent ! President !—Great words ! I doubt we have not grace to bear them. I visited the brethren in my return. I hope good was done : great was my joy.

This year I had my comforts with the cross. I trust some good was done ; I left the Circuit in peace. God was glorified.

August 2d, 1781.—I left Colne, and set out for Leeds, where I was stationed this year with Mr. Mather and Mr. Benson. I am not without fear. God give us success !

October 3d.—I set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and met my dear friends with joy. This journey I trust was a blessing to many, and to my own soul.

January 1st, 1782.—We renewed our covenant, and God confirmed it ; His power was present to heal. I preached on Isaiah lv. 3. The Lord Jehovah was with us, therefore we did rejoice.

Our Conference was at London this year. I did not attend. I had a kind invitation to the metropolis, but I preferred a country Circuit.

August 20th.—I left Leeds, and set out for Birstal. I preached before the old house, from Rev. xxi. 6, where I had preached thirty-five years ago, before there was any preaching-house in the place.

Dec. 23d.—At Hanging-Heaton I preached sister Wilson's funeral sermon. I preached her husband's

fourteen years before, and his daughter's thirteen months after: they all died in the Lord, and left a good testimony behind them.

July 10th, 1783.—We had thunder and lightning, one tremendous clap after another, from ten o'clock till one in the morning, as if the heavens and earth had been in one flame. Who shall stand in the last great day, when worlds on worlds shall pass away and be no more?

August 26th.—My wife and Nancy set out in the midst of thunder and lightning for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Lord saved them, and brought them to their journey's end in peace and safety. Praise the Lord! 27th, I followed them, and reached Newcastle the 29th. This year I had many blessings among my old friends and countrymen, in the land of my nativity.

January 1st, 1784.—In the evening we renewed our covenant, and began the new year with great joy and humility. I set out for Rothbury and Alnwick, but was shut up at Saugh-house with a violent storm of snow. All the roads were filled, no post could travel: therefore my wife could have no tidings. But the Lord provided a harbour for me: I had a good house, a loving friend, and everything needful for man and horse. God is good.

24th.—I set out with a friend for Morpeth.

25th.—Came safe and well to Newcastle. My dear wife and friends received me as one alive from the dead. "Praise the Lord, O my soul!"

July 26th.—Our Conference began with some contention. We had war for many days on account of the Deed of Declaration. Alas! for this. Dear Mr. Fletcher, by prayer and his great humility, gained his point at last.

August 2d.—The war ended, and we had peace. Praise God and the Lamb for ever !

13th.—I came to Bolton, met with a kind reception, and preached that evening. For some time I met with a cross ; but, through faith in the blood of the Lamb, I overcame it.

January 1st, 1785.—We renewed our covenant. This year the work of the Lord prospered, many souls were added to the church, and Satan's kingdom fell. Great was our rejoicing in the Lord.

July 12th.—I set out for London, visited Stockport, Buxton, Derby, &c.

20th.—By the hand of a kind Providence, came to London in good spirits. Bless God ! we had great unity and peace.

August 3d.—Our Conference concluded. Mr. Pawson, Mr. Hanby, and J. Taylor, were ordained, and sent to Scotland. This was a new thing. I was the first Methodist preacher that visited North Britain. The Gospel was then well received, and good was done.

5th.—I left London, visited the brethren, preached the word, and, on the 10th, came to Bolton in peace.

January 1st, 1786.—We renewed our covenant, and God renewed our strength. Many were filled with love, peace, and power.

July 12th.—I left Bolton, and set out for Bristol.

21st.—I preached, from Matt. x. 7, before the Conference. My great Master was with me. I found liberty to preach the kingdom. The Conference began on the 25th, and concluded August 9th. I was appointed for Liverpool.

August 2d.—I left Bristol, and on the 9th reached Bolton. I preached the word at several places by the way, and the power of the Lord was present to heal.

14th.—I set out for Liverpool. I had a good time in this Circuit. My friends were very kind; and the Lord blessed the word, and gave me success.

30th.—Mr. Lee, who succeeded me at Bolton, died in peace, and entered into his rest.

October 3d.—I preached his funeral sermon to a large congregation. It was a solemn time indeed. I knew the man well, and his conversation. I laboured with him in several Circuits in England and Scotland. He was a good preacher, and a pious man. Our Conference began the last Tuesday in July, 1787. We had great peace and unity, and our love abounded to God and all mankind.

August 8th.—I returned to Bolton again. Some few began to think I came too often round, and were not well pleased; but the Lord owned His poor servant more and more, stopped every mouth, and made many hearts rejoice.

January 5th, 1788.—Old Christmas-day. I entered into the sixty-sixth year of my age. A moment! a moment!

January 1st, 1790.—I preached from 2 Cor. ix. 15. He is all in heaven and on earth.

Our Conference was this year at Bristol, but I did not attend. I have now preached and travelled over England, Scotland, and Ireland, about forty-seven years; yet I merit nothing. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. It now appears to me I shall keep a regular Circuit no longer, but go where my good Lord and Master directs. Lord, give peace and success! I spent the remaining part of this year in Liverpool, Colne, Burnley, Paddiham, Blackburn, and Preston. I hope I may say with humility, good was done; and I found a blessing as a present reward.

The Rev. Mr. John Wesley died March 2d, 1791, aged eighty-eight. This great man is now gone to receive his reward, and his works will follow him. Though he be dead, he yet speaketh. He was a singular character.

March 30th.—I preached his funeral sermon on John xix. 30: "It is finished." When I began to sing, a remarkable incident happened: a plain, simple man heard something crack, and immediately cried out, "The gallery is coming down!" This dreadful cry struck the whole congregation with a panic; all was in confusion. The people came down stairs one over another. Some came over the gallery, others through the windows; but the commotion was soon over, all was still as night, and I began and finished my sermon with quietness. It was a good season; there were many melting hearts.

This year I visited our friends in Yorkshire; and I have reason to believe the Lord was with me, and good was done. Our Conference began at Manchester, July 27th, and ended August 8th. Above two hundred preachers attended. Our new mode of government was settled with great unanimity. For such a body of men to agree in one, we must say, "is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes."

January 1st, 1792.—February, March, and April, I laboured at and near Bolton; the rest of the year I made little excursions to the neighbouring Circuits. I met with some trials, but many comforts. I found tranquillity. The good word was blessed, the churches edified, and God our Saviour glorified.

January 1st, 1793.—In the spring, I left Bolton, and visited Yorkshire and other places. The hand of the Lord was with me, and His power was made

manifest. Sinners were apprized of their danger, and saints built up in their most holy faith.

January 1st, 1794.—I can now do but little. I grow feeble; but the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my portion. Thou art my all: my theme, my inspiration, and my crown! Keep me and save me to the end! Amen.

January 1st, 1795.—I am spared, and able to do a little. I have still one mite to cast into His treasury. He has made me a wonder to myself. I have now been about fifty-two years in my good Lord's service: He has kept me by His mighty power, and I trust in His infinite mercy He will keep me to the end. I have seen wonders night and day, by land and sea. Jesus is my foundation, way, and end. I have now entered into the seventy-third year of my age. O, what a dwarf! I know little; I have done little; I have suffered little. Lord, forgive my sins, my virtues too, through blood Divine!

January 1st, 1796.—Through infinite mercy, I am still spared to do a little for my dear Lord and Master. I visited Yorkshire this year, and made many other excursions. I saw the unerring hand of a kind Providence in all my ways.

January 1st, 1797.—Through mercy, I am still preaching. My soul thirsts for the prosperity of Sion. O, may our God hasten the accomplishment of His great and precious promises, and the glory of the latter days!

July 27th.—I attended our Conference at Leeds; and, at the desire of my brethren, preached. I hope the word did not fall to the ground. This year has been a year of many mercies.

January 1st, 1798.—My God is good; my God is love; my God is all, and all things to me,—to me, a

worm, nothing, vile, and base. I am lost in wonder, love, and praise !

January 1st, 1799.—We began this year with the sound of the jubilee trumpet. We had a good season ; the word did run, and was glorified.

July 28th.—I attended the Conference at Manchester ; preached, and rejoiced to see my brethren : it was a time of love. I then set out for Liverpool ; preached in all the chapels to large congregations ; and I have reason to believe God did own His own word.

January 1st, 1800.—We began this year with prayer and praise. February, March, April, and May, preached at and about Bolton. In August I visited Liverpool ; preached in all their chapels to large auditories. My Lord and Master gave me a blessing, a present reward ; and I returned to Bolton in peace.

January 1st, 1801.—We ended the old year with prayer, and began the new year with praises.

29th.—I preached on Psalm cxix. 77 : “ Let Thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live.” I am dead : let Thy mercy come unto me ; show me favour, and I shall live,—live to Thy glory here, and live with Thee in glory for ever. Amen.

THE following particulars respecting the close of Mr. Hopper's life are collected from Mrs. Hopper, from his niece, and his faithful friend, Mr. George Eskrick :—

ABOUT sixteen years ago, Mr. Hopper having built a house adjoining the chapel at Bolton-le-moors,

from that time his wife and family resided there; while he continued his itinerant labours in the neighbouring Circuits till the Conference of 1790; when, finding the infirmities of old age increasing, and being no longer capable of doing the work of an evangelist, he desisted, and from that period his labours were principally confined to Bolton; though he generally paid an annual visit to his friends in Yorkshire, and the adjacent Circuits.

Thus he continued to spend the remainder of his strength in that blessed work in which he had given indubitable proof that his whole heart had been for many years engaged.

He preached frequently in Bolton, and his discourses generally afforded instruction and profit; and they were often accompanied with a Divine influence to the hearers.

He preached his last sermon about a week before his confinement, from John xvi. 33: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." It was attended with a peculiar blessing to many; and he delivered it with an uncommon degree of energy.

In the beginning of December, 1801, while cutting a loaf of bread, his arm suddenly fell, and it was supposed that he had dislocated his shoulder. His pain was very great; and from that time he was confined to the house. He had also another complaint of a very painful nature, supposed to have been the effects of his incessant labours and sufferings in the early part of his life. This, in conjunction with the violent pain in his arm and shoulder, caused him to consume away like a garment fretted by the moth; and he was, for some weeks before his death, reduced almost to a skeleton. In the beginning of February

he was confined to his room, and soon after to his bed. He bore his afflictions with invincible patience and Christian fortitude. Sometimes he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, pity a poor sufferer;" but would instantly say, "It is all right; it is all right; it will soon be over; His will be done." The enemy was never permitted in the least to disturb him. His old, faithful friend, George Eskrick, sat up with him every other night, and sometimes two nights together, and was a witness of his holy resignation to the will of his heavenly Father.

"On Thursday, February 25th," says Mr. Atmore, "I went to Bolton, to see Mr. Hopper. When I entered the room, he was in a doze; but as soon as he awoke, he gave me his hand, and, with great affection, said, 'O, my dear friend, how glad I am to see you! Providence has sent you. You and I have often met; and this will be our last meeting on earth. But we shall meet in our Father's house above.' He then desired his niece to bring his own drawer. He took from thence several papers; and, after looking at them for some time, he said, 'I commit these papers to you: here is an account of my poor, insignificant life and labours, and a sermon I preached on the only foundation God has laid in Zion for poor sinners to build their hopes of salvation upon. On this foundation all my hopes are founded now; and it does support me! I have not a doubt,—no, not the shadow of a doubt; and as for the enemy, I know not what is become of him. I have neither seen him, nor heard of him, for some time. I think he has quitted the field.' He then put the papers into my hand, and said, 'If you think they will be of any use to the church and the world, take them, make them your own; revise, make what alterations

you please, and send them forth in the name of the Lord.'"

The last day or two he lay quite composed; he spoke very little, but was frequently engaged in earnest, fervent prayer, often saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." On Friday evening, March 5th, 1802, he entered into his Master's joy, in the eightieth year of his age.

He had given particular directions concerning his funeral; and, agreeably to his request, his remains were deposited in a new vault, on a spot of ground he himself had pointed out when in perfect health, in the new churchyard in Bolton. His funeral was attended by a great multitude of his friends, and the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity; and his body was committed to the earth "in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," having been a steady follower of Christ for upwards of fifty-nine years, and a faithful preacher of the Gospel for about fifty-seven.

He was a plain man, of good understanding, of some learning, and of a sound judgment,—a scribe well-instructed in the things of the kingdom,—a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. His talents for the ministry were very considerable; but he was altogether an original, and his matter and method were peculiar to himself. He was a Boanerges, a "son of thunder," to the careless sinner, whom he frequently made to tremble, while he forcibly preached the "terrors of the Lord," and "warned him to flee from the wrath to come." And he knew well how to speak a word in season "to them that were weary:" he was a "son of consolation" to the "mourners in

Sion," to whom he proclaimed the Saviour of the world, as the only foundation of their hope and confidence, for pardon, holiness, and heaven. To humble, faithful believers, he preached the Lord that bought them, as made of God unto them "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;" at the same time he "affirmed constantly, that they who had believed in God should be careful to maintain good works." Thus did this man of God, for upwards of half a century, "warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Few public men have preserved a more unblemished character, conducted themselves with greater propriety, or been more justly or generally beloved and respected.

His labours for a series of years were very extensive and successful. He formed some of the first societies in the north of England, visited Ireland several times, was the first Methodist preacher who went into North Britain; and travelled through a great number of the Circuits in this kingdom, with honour to himself and profit to the people. He now rests from his labours, and his works will follow him.

A sermon on the occasion of Mr. Hopper's death was preached by the Rev. Thomas Cooper, from 2 Sam. iii. 38: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" It was published in the Methodist Magazine for September, 1803. The preacher says, respecting Mr. Hopper, "He was a great man naturally, being superior to most others in the extent of his mental powers; in respect to which the difference is so great among men, that, while some, with all the means of improvement

at their command, are incapable of attaining any respectable distinction, others, without such advantages, find their way, in defiance of the most formidable impediments, to eminence in the world. To the truth of this remark, Mr. Hopper afforded no small testimony, having risen from an humble situation in life to a high degree of celebrity as a public speaker.

“He was a person of an exceedingly quick apprehension, and of so clear an understanding as not easily to be imposed upon. Though the warmth and fertility of his imagination were obviously great, he never suffered himself to be hurried by it into any ridiculous extravagancies; but so governed it by a sound judgment, as to make it subservient to the grand design of his ministry. To these he added a strong memory; which, as it faithfully retained what was committed to its charge, so it greatly contributed to his stock of useful knowledge, and of course to those abilities which made him so acceptable to his numerous hearers. Of those abilities, however, he appeared to have no flattering opinion himself, as he seldom spoke in reference to them but in terms of great humility; yet they, together with his genuine piety, were so well known to, and appreciated by, his discerning friends, as to procure him that deference in all places which is rarely paid but to real worth.

“Had he been intended for any of those professions which are most esteemed among men, there is every reason to believe that he would have excelled in them; as the God of nature had furnished him with all the talents necessary to form the great man, in whatever sphere he might have been called to move. But it was happy for himself, as well as for

thousands of his fellow-creatures, that those talents were consecrated to the service of the temple, and employed against the strongholds of sin, in casting down the proud imaginations of the carnal mind, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.

“ His duty as a minister requiring him to be furnished unto every good word and work, to speak as the oracles of God, and to declare His whole counsel to the church, he wisely directed his first studies to the holy Scriptures. These he thoroughly examined, and most clearly discovered in them that infallible authority with which they are supported, those Divine evidences with which they abound, and the wonderful connexion and harmony which run through the whole. From this source of wisdom and truth he supplied himself with the weapons of his defence against opposing errors ; with the standard of his religious experience, with the rule of his life, and with his motives of encouragement and support in the kingdom and patience of Jesus : not from the ethics of pagan philosophers, or the pompous Councils of the Christian priesthood, but from this inestimable source, it was that he provided himself with all the means of feeding the flock of Christ, and of giving to every one his portion of meat in due season.

“ That the people might sustain no loss through any avoidable deficiency in him, he laboured diligently to make himself master of those rules which would best enable him to convey instruction to their minds in the most easy and convincing manner. In most of his public discourses the well-informed hearer would at once perceive the man of genius and of science, as well by their disposition and arrangement, as by the judicious selection of meta-

phorical illustrations with which they were adorned ; so that he was justly esteemed a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

“He was not entirely unacquainted with what are called the learned languages. As he considered the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of the utmost importance, both to himself and to mankind at large ; and believing it impossible for them to be translated into foreign languages without depriving them of many of their native beauties, he regarded it a duty which he owed to himself, to God, and the church, to acquire some knowledge of those languages in which the Scriptures were originally written.

“At that time of his life when the vivacity of youth, and the vigour of a good constitution, served, in some measure, to supply the want of better knowledge, he foresaw that he might survive a period when those resources would totally fail ; and this stimulated him to such a course of application as enabled him fully to keep pace with the increasing light of his hearers, and to maintain his eminence in the ministry, with little abatement, to the close of his protracted pilgrimage.

“Though experience shows the difficulty of indulging a thirst for natural and spiritual instructions at the same time, yet we have examples in proof of the possibility of doing so ; and we may confidently affirm Mr. Hopper to have been one, if the account which he has published of himself is entitled to our credit, which no one who had the happiness of knowing him will ever be tempted to call in question. While he sought the ornament of a cultivated understanding, he neglected not the ornament

of a meek and quiet spirit; always remembering that, 'whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.'

"He was equally great in respect to the success which attended the employment of his abilities in the cause of truth. His first success was among his own relations, many of whom very soon became witnesses of the truth he taught; and the success with which he began increased in proportion as he extended his labours. Being a good man, full of faith, and mighty in the Scriptures, God greatly blessed his word both to saints and sinners, graciously banished all his fears, and made him as bold as a lion in the face of all his dangers.

"It often happened, while he was delivering his message to tumultuous assemblies, with an energy which strongly marked the interest which he himself had in it, that giddy triflers, impious despisers, ring-leaders of mobs, and the most abandoned reprobates, have wondered, trembled, given signs, as convincing as they were sudden, of the deepest compunction and sorrow of heart; the bitter wailings of the penitent prisoners have been turned into songs of deliverance; and the whole assembly has been awfully affected with a sense of the majesty and presence of God. And that Divine unction which rendered his word efficacious during the earlier years of his ministry continued to attend him, both in his public and more private exercises, to the end of his life."

THE following letter was written, I believe, to the late Rev. George Whitefield. It contains a particular account of the dying experience of the late Mrs. Hopper:—

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *August 28th, 1755.*

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

So true is the maxim of St. Augustine, "It is impossible to lose anything without sorrow, but what we possess without passion." We believe there are few persons free from an infinite number of these engagements, though, indeed, we may be ignorant of them, till an actual separation discovers what they are; and when the precious soul is separated from them, it has then a sense of the privation proportionable to its union with them. All transitory things are but shadows, and the most beautiful flowers soon fade away. We commonly say, "Afflictions are blessings in disguise;" and may we not presume to say, with the same propriety, that "human comforts are afflictions in disguise," more especially if they engross any part of the heart which belongs to our heavenly Father? Therefore we ought to enjoy all things in God, and for His glory, who is the centre of all perfection, the fountain of all true happiness, and the one chief good.

Must I now exhibit a Christian tragedy? I will, then, tell you, my dear friend, I have been very happy for ten years, three months, and six days, with an agreeable companion, a constant friend, and a most dear, loving, affectionate wife. But now, alas! alas! I look back, and, behold, it is a dream.

Friday, the 15th of August, 1755, my dear and most loving wife took a violent nervous fever, at the

Hagg, in Derwent-water, the place of her nativity; and on the 25th died in perfect peace, in the glorious arms of her dear Redeemer. On the 27th, her funeral sermon was preached at the same place, to a large auditory, who came from every quarter; and that evening she was interred in Ryton church, amongst the dry bones of her dear ancestors, where her body shall sweetly rest till the morning of the general resurrection.

But perhaps it may be more agreeable to you still, if I give you a more particular account of God's gracious dealings with her in her sickness, more especially in the solemn article of death. In the beginning of her illness, Satan endeavoured, by his infernal insinuations, to make her give up her shield, and cast away her confidence, by suggesting, "You are built upon the sand, you have laid a wrong foundation; all you have to trust in, after twelve years' progress in the Christian religion, are only false imaginations, a feigned castle in the air, or a mere chimera in your head; therefore you must lie down in sorrow, and be miserably disappointed in the end."

When this violent storm came upon her so near the haven, she immediately fled to the throne of grace, the rock of Israel; for it was now high time to cast anchor on that sure bottom, to examine her faith, and the ground of her eternal hopes. She therefore entreated the almighty God of Jacob to discover her real state, that she might see and know whether her condition was so melancholy in reality, or whether it was only a flood of temptations, or the voice of the enemy. She had no sooner supplicated the Friend of sinners, but the cloud broke, and the glorious sun of righteousness began to shine, the old

subtle tempter fled, and God filled her with joy and peace in believing.

After she had spoken a few words to me concerning some temporal affairs, she gave up this world, her dear friends and relations, and the dearest part of herself, cheerfully. She patiently endured all her afflictions, and drank the bitter cup without complaining; nay, not so much as desiring the least abatement of her pain, or mitigation of her trouble. Her only request was for patience and resignation to bear and suffer all her heavenly Father's will. She expressed her firm trust and confidence in the Lord several times, without fear or doubt, as her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, as long as she could speak; and after that useful organ was silent, she manifested her inward joy, and the peace she felt, by her patience and heavenly looks. During this time I prayed with her twice; and was enabled in confidence to commit her body to the earth from whence it came, and her precious soul to the dear Redeemer who bought it with His most precious blood. Near the time of her happy departure, I took her in my arms, and said, "Farewell! farewell! farewell! my dear wife, and most loving companion! The Lord receive thy spirit!" When death, that long-desired and long-expected friend, was executing his last office, and drawing the last pin of the poor earthly tabernacle, she looked up, and gave me a parting smile, and then calmly and sweetly fell asleep in the arms of Christ, without a struggle, sigh, or groan.

Now, my dear friend, what shall I say? I soon shall close my weary eyes in peace, and stretch composed upon my dusty bed. O death! thy quiet and refreshing shade shall yield a long, an unmolested

rest from all our fruitless toil and vanity below the sun. May we love the dear Redeemer! and may we live in Him, and die in Him! is the sincere prayer of your affectionate brother and afflicted friend,

C. H.

MR. WHITEFIELD'S ANSWER.

MANCHESTER, *August 29th*, 1755.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

THIS day, at noon, I heard and felt your mournful, joyful account of the triumphant departure of your dear, dear yoke-fellow. Surely, thought I, affliction makes one eloquent. Surely, thought I, I love and sympathize with the dear afflicted writer from the very bottom of my heart. This hath constrained me to pray for you; and, being just come from my God, the same love constrains me to write you these few lines. Courage, my dear man! courage! Wish her not down. Yonder she is, encircled in the arms of our Jesus! We shall go to her, but she will not return to us. O for patience to wait! I am sick of this world, I am sick of time, I am sick of all poor transitory things. I long, I long to be in a happy eternity. O that we may be found doing our Master's will, and humbly waiting at His bleeding feet! Indeed I feel, I feel I love you, and could now freely weep over you. O to sit loose to all created objects! Alas! alas! how soon may our Isaacs be called for, and our beloved friends cut off with a stroke! What should we do, had we not an unchangeable Jesus to go to? Into His dear and everlasting arms I most humbly commit you. My heart is full: I could write much, but am called away. Adieu; the Lord be with you and yours, and

all! We have had golden seasons abroad, and sweet invitations at home. Help me to cry, "Grace! grace!" and accept of this as a token of unfeigned sympathizing love, from yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

G. W.

LETTER FROM THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, ON THE
SAME SUBJECT.

ST. IVES, *September 12th, 1755.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and wise are all His ways. The great point is to understand the design of His gracious wisdom, and to answer and fulfil that design. One thing is certain: He calls you to a more full and absolute dedication of your soul and body to Him. He calls you to converse with Him more in prayer and meditation. In the former we more directly speak to God; in the latter, He speaks to us. And every possible loss is gain, if it produces this blessed effect.

Consider yourself as now more than ever married to Christ and His dear people: then, even for this kindly-severe dispensation, you should praise Him for ever.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

BRISTOL, *October 8th, 1755.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THERE is something of an openness and frankness

in your temper which I love; but that very same temper will sometimes expose you to inconveniences, unless you always have an eye to God, that He may give you steadiness and resolution. O, keep your heart with all diligence, and do not take one step without first consulting your best friends. You have one business on earth,—to save souls. Give yourself wholly to this. Fulfil the work of a preacher, and of an assistant, as you never did before. Be another Thomas Walsh. Pursue the whole of scriptural Christianity. Stand upon the edge of this world, ready to take wing; having your feet on earth, your eyes and heart in heaven.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS MITCHELL.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

1. I WAS born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, December 3d, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle who was in the same parish. When I was turned four years old, my mother went one day to market, and left me to take care of the house, and two younger children. She had not been gone long before I set the bed on fire. A neighbour, seeing the smoke, and thinking the house was on fire, came with all speed to our assistance. In a short time she, with some others, extinguished the fire. Had it not been for this providential assistance, we might all have been burned to death; for we had not sense to get out of the way. From five years old I had strong convictions at times, and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled, till I had said my prayers, which I thought would make all up.

2. At fourteen, I was bound apprentice to a mason. While I lived with my master, I had little concern for my soul. But a few years after, at the time of the Rebellion, I enlisted among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which one time in particular took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear death exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I thought I must fulfil it; but I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

3. In the year 1746, the Rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the Methodists. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy. Some time after I went to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith; yea, that the very worst of sinners might be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon after, I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." He showed clearly, that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon, and much more so in singing these words:—

"Whither should a sinner go?
His wounds for me stand open wide:
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified."

4. But when he told us, we might know our sins forgiven in this life, yea, this very moment, it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it at all. But I continued in prayer; and in a few days I was convinced of it, to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear; and at the same time He filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and could trust Him, and praise Him with joyful lips. I could sing with all my heart,

“O what shall I do, my Saviour to praise?
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace;
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
The weakest believer that hangs upon Him!”

5. Soon after this, Mr. John Wesley came to Bradford, and preached on, “This one thing I do.” He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back, and left me alone; yet afterward some of them returned. Before this, I thought my hill was so strong, that I could never be moved. But, seeing so many fall into sin, I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief; and was fully convinced, that there must be a farther change in my heart, before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Keighley, and had many opportunities of hearing and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But, feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in despair. I could scarce pray at all, and was tempted to murder myself. One day, as I was going to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and going over a bridge, I was strongly tempted to leap into the river; but the Lord had mercy upon me, and delivered me from this temptation. Yet still I had many fears. I was in this

state near half a year, finding no comfort in anything. But one evening, one of our friends prayed in the society, and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterwards saw that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

6. Not long after this, I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow-creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for Him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived abounding with all manner of wickedness, and no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that; for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly, whether I was called to speak in public or no. After many reasonings in my mind, I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me; my bones shook, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me: some of them heard with pain, as my gifts were very small, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

7. But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would; and God began to bless my weak endeavours. Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine. Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and

had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer, that God would show me the way wherein I should go. Being now employed at Sir Walter Coverley's, in the parish of Guiseley, I met with a few serious people at Yeadon. They were just setting out in the ways of God, and desired me to give a word of exhortation among them. I did so a few times, and God was pleased to bless it to their souls. The little society increased, and they all dearly loved one another. But Satan was not idle. Every time we met, a riotous mob gathered round the house, and disturbed us much.

8. One evening, while William Darney was preaching, the curate of Guiseley came at the head of a large mob, who threw eggs in his face, pulled him down, dragged him out of the house on the ground, and stamped upon him. The curate himself then thought it was enough, and bade them let him alone, and go their way. Some time after Jonathan Maskew came. As soon as he began to speak, the same mob came, pulled him down, and dragged him out of the house. They then tore off his clothes, and dragged him along upon his naked back over the gravel and pavement. When they thought they had sufficiently bruised him, they let him go, and went away. With much difficulty he crept to a friend's house, where they dressed his wounds, and got him some clothes. It was my turn to go next. No sooner was I at the town, than the mob came, like so many roaring lions. My friends advised me not to preach that night; and undertook to carry me out of the town. But the mob followed me in a great rage, and stoned me for near two miles, so that it was several weeks before I got well of the bruises I then received.

9. About this time a carpenter was swearing horribly, whom I calmly reproved. He immediately flew in a violent passion, and having an axe in his hand, lifted it up, and swore he would cleave my head in a moment. But just as he was going to strike, a man that stood by snatched hold of his arm, and held him till his passion cooled. At first I felt a little fear, but it soon vanished away.

10. While I was working at Sir Walter's, some one informed him that I was a Methodist. He was much displeased, saying, "I like him for a workman; but I hate his religion." This was chiefly owing to his steward, whom I had often reproved for swearing. He mortally hated me on that account. But in a little time he was taken ill. Perceiving himself worse, he sent a message to me, earnestly desiring I would come and pray with him. I went, and found him in an agony of conviction, crying aloud for mercy. I showed him where mercy was to be found, and then went to prayer with him. While I was praying, his heart seemed broken, and he was bathed in tears. He owned he had been a grievous sinner; but he cried to God with his latest breath, and I believe not in vain.

11. I stayed some time after in these parts, and was fully employed. All the day I wrought diligently at my business; in the evenings I called sinners to repentance. And now the mobs were not so furious, so that we had no considerable interruption. In the mean time I waited to see whether the Lord had anything for me to do. I made it matter of continual prayer, that He would make my way plain before me. And in a little while I had much more of the best work upon my hands. I was desired to give an exhortation at a village called

Hartwith. I went thither several times. Several here were deeply convinced of sin; and two or three soon found redemption in the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins. Afterwards I was invited to Thirsk. Here I found a few hungry souls. But they were as sheep without a shepherd, seldom hearing anything like the Gospel. I spent two nights among them. The serious people were much refreshed; some were awakened and saw their danger, and cried out for mercy.

12. After this I went to Stockton, where I found a lively people, who had been in society for some time. I preached several times among them with great liberty of soul, and freedom of speech; and, to all appearance, the word had much effect on the hearers. Here I met with Mr. Larwood, who behaved very kindly to me, and told me he hoped I should be very useful if I kept humble. He then sent me before him to York and Leeds, where I preached, and gave notice of his coming. From Leeds I went to Birstal. It happened to be their preaching-night. John Nelson was sick in bed; so the people desired me to preach, or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could; and the people seemed well satisfied. The next day I went to High-town, and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul; and I have reason to believe that the people were well satisfied.

13. From Birstal I went to Heptonstal. Here I met with a lively people, who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. Among others, a very tall man, who was a butcher,

was cut to the heart. But it had a very bad effect upon him for the present. For he went home and beat his wife in a most terrible manner, because he thought she had told me of all his sinful ways. But afterwards he was convinced and converted. I continued some time in these parts, and went to several places in Lancashire. Here also I found many were awakened, and several found peace with God, while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular Circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

14. I continued here some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But, by the blessing of God, I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes; but I caught no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and advice of good Mr. Grimshaw.

15. One time Paul Greenwood and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, "If you are sent of God to preach the Gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed, you must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the Gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth; and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth. And he will let nothing go, for God and His cause, but what is forced from him."

16. In the year 1751 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. I found a serious people and an open door;

but there were many adversaries. This was far the most trying year which I had ever known. But in every temptation God made a way to escape, that I might be able to bear it.

On Sunday, August 7th, I came to Wrangle, very early in the morning. I preached, as usual, at five. About six, two constables came, at the head of a large mob. They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public-house, where they kept me till four in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, "I will go to the minister, and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go." When he came back, he said, "They were not to let him go yet." So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the neck. Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot; and then they carried me into a public-house again. Here I was kept, till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again, and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep. Here, four men took me by my legs and arms, and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink; but it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to the Lord, and was content His will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the

water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned. So they watched till I came above water, and then, catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out.

17. I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself, I saw only two men standing by me. One of them helped me up, and desired me to go with him. He brought me to a little house, where they quickly put me to bed. But I had not lain long, before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, carried me into the street, and swore they would take away one of my limbs, if I would not promise to come there no more. I told them, "I can promise no such thing." But the man that had hold of me promised for me, and took me back into the house, and put me to bed again.

Some of the mob then went to the minister again, to know what they must do with me. He told them, "You must take him out of the parish." So they came and took me out of bed a second time. But I had no clothes to put on; my own being wet, and also covered with paint. But they put an old coat about me, took me about a mile, and set me upon a little hill. They then shouted three times, "God save the king, and the devil take the preacher!"

18. Here they left me penniless and friendless: for no one durst come near me. And my strength was nearly gone; so that I had much ado to walk, or even to stand. But, from the beginning to the end, my mind was in perfect peace. I found no anger or resentment, but could heartily pray for my persecutors. But I knew not what to do, or where to go. Indeed, one of our friends lived three or four

miles off. But I was so weak and ill, that it did not seem possible for me to get so far. However, I trusted in God, and set out; and at length I got to the house. The family did everything for me that was in their power: they got me clothes, and whatever else was needful. I rested four days with them, in which time my strength was tolerably restored. Then I went into the Circuit, where I met with more persecution. As I was preaching in a certain village in the Fen, the mob came into the house, and broke through the congregation, in order to pull me down; but the good woman of the house took me into the parlour, and stood in the door with a great kitchen-poker in her hand, and told the mob, the first man that came near the door, she would knock him down. As she was very big with child, and near the time of her travail, this, with the sight of the great poker, kept them off, so that they could not get at me. However, they stayed some time, and then left the house without doing much harm. After they were gone, I gave an exhortation, went to prayer, and then we went to bed in peace. In the midst of this persecution, many were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so our consolations by Christ abounded also. As to the lions at Wrangle, an appeal to the court of King's Bench made both them and the minister quiet as lambs.

19. Coming in December into Lancashire, I found trials of quite another kind. The poor people were in the utmost confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep. John Bennet, who before loved and revered Mr. Wesley for his work's sake, since he got into his new opinions, hated him cordially, and

laboured to set all the people against him. He told them, in the open congregation, that Mr. Wesley was a pope, and that he preached nothing but Popery. December 30th, I met him at Bolton. I desired him to preach; but he would not. So I got up, and spoke as well as I could, though with a heavy heart. After I had done, he met the society, and said many bitter things of Mr. Wesley. He then spread out his hands, and cried, "Popery! Popery! I will not be in connexion with him any more." I could not help telling him, "The spirit in which you now speak is not of God. Neither are you fit for the pulpit, while you are of such a spirit." While I was speaking, a woman that stood by me struck me in the face with all her might. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar; so I thought it best to retire. Afterward I believed it was my duty to expostulate with him; but it did not avail: it seemed to me that all love was departed from him. His mind was wholly set against Mr. Wesley, and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline; and he had infused his own spirit into the people in many places: so that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept my soul in peace and love. Glory be unto His holy name!

20. In May, 1752, I came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, after all the storms I had gone through, I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction. And it pleased the Lord to prosper my labours in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Gateshead-fell, and many other places, where many sinners were both convinced and converted to God. One time, while I was at Berwick, a poor woman came to the house where I was, with a heavy child on her back. She had come from

Ireland, and was going into Scotland. The woman of the house asked her to come in, and gave her some tea. She seemed to be very poor, and wanted help. But as I had only ninepence, and had thirty miles to ride the next day, I thought I could not spare her anything; but after she had got the child again on her back, and was setting off, my heart pitied her, so I gave her sixpence out of my little stock, and had threepence left. But I trusted in God's providence, and knew that He would provide for me. After preaching the next morning, a poor soldier put two shillings into my hand. So God rewarded me fourfold. I could not help praising Him for this instance of His goodness to me.

21. On May 8th, 1753, I came with Mr. Wesley from Newcastle to York. On the 12th he preached to a large congregation; and the next morning, from, "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears, some for joy, and some from a sense of their sins. He had designed to go on to Lincolnshire. But, through the importunity of the people, he consented to stay a little at York, and desired me to go in his place.

22. From the following Conference, (at which fourteen preachers were present, beside Mr. Wesley and his brother,) I went into Wiltshire, where Mr. Pearce, of Bradford, was as a father to me. While I was in this Circuit, I went to see a young man (Mr. Thomas Olivers) who had given an exhortation at times among the people. I found him working hard for his bread. He seemed to me to have much sense, and to be very sincere. I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and told him that I, and many more, thought

he might be very useful. Mr. Wesley desired he might go with me into Cornwall. So we went together; and I believe the Lord made us a blessing to that people: many were convinced and converted, and my friend grew very much in knowledge, and, I hope, in the fear of the Lord. He has been a very useful man in the church of God, and one who has gone through many trials. The Lord help both him and me to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of eternal life! Here I formed a firm resolution of cleaving more closely to God than ever I had done before. I longed to be wholly freed from the enemies which I carried in my own bosom. I saw no other could possibly hurt me, if I could but conquer them. I read the Bible and prayed much, and found many blessings from the Lord. And I found, in particular, an entire disengagement from all earthly things. My soul was even as a weaned child. I was willing to be anything or nothing. I had no desire for anything in this world, but to live unto the glory of God. O, how easy does it make everything, when we can give up all for Christ!

23. After I had spent some time in Devonshire and Cornwall, I was sent for up to London. Here I had a fever for some time. When I was pretty well recovered, Mr. Wesley desired me to go down to Norwich. I was not well upon the road; but was abundantly worse when I came thither. But, following the advice of a skilful man, I was in a while restored to health and strength. Here I found much comfort among a poor but a loving people. I was in this Circuit (putting the first and second time together) about four years. But in the latter part of this time, I had many trials from J. Wheatley's people. Mr. Wesley had been prevailed upon to take the Taber-

nacle, and to receive Wheatley's people under his care. Wheatley used to call them "my dear lambs;" but such lion-like lambs did I never see. Discipline they knew nothing of; every one would do what was right in his own eyes. And our doctrine was an abomination to them. Great part of them were grounded in Antinomianism. The very sound of "perfection" they abhorred; they could hardly bear the word "holiness." Nothing was pleasing to them, but "faith, faith;" without a word either of its inward or outward fruits.

24. Between the first and second time of my being at Norwich, I spent some time in Sussex. The first place that I preached at was Rye, where no Methodist had ever preached before. Yet there was no opposition, but they received the word with joy and readiness of mind. And many soon felt the burden of their sins, several of whom quickly found peace with God. Most of these very willingly joined together in a little society; some of whom are lodged in Abraham's bosom; and others still remain walking in the way to Sion.

25. Hence I went to several country places. But they were not all so peaceable as at Rye. At the desire of a serious man, I went to Hawkhurst; he had requested me to preach at his house. About six in the evening I began. But I had not spoken many words, before a numerous mob broke in, pulled me down from the place where I stood, and forced me out of the house. Then they struck up my heels, and dragged me upon my back about half a mile to a public-house called Highgate, where I found many gentlemen, with the minister of the parish. They asked, "By what authority do you preach?" I answered, "By the authority of King George," and

showed them my licence. They spoke a little together, and said, "You may go about your business." But, observing the house was filled with a drunken mob, I said, "Gentlemen, I will not go, unless I have a constable to guard me." They immediately sent for a constable, who guarded me to the house from whence I came. But as it was winter time, and the road very dirty, I was in a poor condition, being a good deal bruised, and all my clothes plastered over with dirt. However, after I had got some dry clothes, and taken a little refreshment, I prayed with the family, and then God gave me quiet and refreshing sleep. When I came to London, I applied to a lawyer, who sent down writs for five of the ringleaders. But they quickly came to an agreement. They readily paid all the charges. And here ended our persecution in Sussex. I found a thankful heart for a good king, good laws, and liberty of conscience. And about this time I had much of the presence of the Lord: He was good to me, both as to my body and soul. I prayed much, and the Lord heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. From Sussex I went to Norwich a second time, and here found a young woman that I thought would make me a good wife. In October, 1760, we were married. I bless the Lord for her: she is one of the most suitable wives for me, that I could have found in all the world.

26. In August, 1778, I was stationed in Staffordshire where I spent two years with much satisfaction. The latter year I had many trials, both outward and inward. The work of the Lord did not seem to go forward among the people in some places; but at others it prospered much, while love and peace prevailed among us, which gave me encouragement. I

found some refreshings in my own soul at times, and I could trust the Lord in every trial. His promises were a means of keeping me from being weary and faint in my mind. And by His blessing I got through all, and saw that every trial works for good. The words of the apostle were of great use to me: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Lord, help me to see Thy good hand in all my trials, that they may be a means of making me more holy in all manner of conversation!

In July, 1780, I set out for Bristol, and in my way met with several of our brethren, some of whom I had not seen for many years. It rejoiced my heart to find them still in the way of the Lord, after all their trials; and that they were still desirous to preach the Gospel of Christ. Our journey was attended with much peace and love; and we rejoiced that the Lord had helped us thus far. At this Conference I was ordered to go to Canterbury; and on August 20th I got safe there: my wife and children having arrived one day before me. I was very thankful to the Lord for His goodness in bringing them safe to this place. I had not been here long before I found that true religion had lost ground. When I left them, two-and-twenty years ago, they were a loving, lively people. But they fell out by the way, and lost their love one for another. I was much troubled to see them so cold and careless in the cause of God. This, with my own infirmities, brought me into much trouble of mind. But I gave myself up to prayer, and begged of the Lord that He would deliver me from whatever hindered His work in my own soul;

and that He would do it in His own way. About the middle of October last, He laid His afflicting hand upon me. I had a fever attended with an ague. This continued half a year. I was under the care of an apothecary in Canterbury. He did all he could to remove my disorder, but without effect. From Canterbury I removed to Dover, thinking the change of air would help me; but I still continued as bad as ever. While I was here, Mr. Boardman, one of our preachers, came to see me; and by Mr. Wesley's and his desire, I came to London. After I arrived, my disorder grew worse and worse, almost every day. On April 6th I was so ill, that all about me thought I was dying. Dr. Lettsome attended me very constantly, without fee or reward. He was of great service to me. For, through the means he made use of, the fever was soon removed.

When I was first taken ill, the Lord removed all uneasiness from my mind. I received great comfort in my soul, and could rejoice in the God of my salvation. Indeed, a sense of His goodness continued with me in all my afflictions; which was a cause of such cheerfulness, as I had scarce known for twenty years before. I could frequently sing,

“ How good Thou art, how large Thy grace!
How easy to forgive!
The helpless Thou delight'st to raise,
And by Thy love I live.”

I now look back on the labour of three-and-thirty years, and I do not repent of it. I am not grown weary either of my Master, or the work I am engaged in. Though I am weak in body, and in the decline of life, my heart is still engaged in the cause of God. I am never more happy than when I feel the love of Christ in my heart, and am declaring His praise to

others. There is nothing like the love of Christ in the heart to make us holy and happy. It is love alone that expels all sin out of the heart. Wherever love is wanting, there is hell; and where love fills the heart, there is heaven. This has been a medicine to me ever since I set out. When I was low, it was this that raised me up. When sin and Satan beset me on every side, it was this that drove them away.

“O Love, how cheering is thy ray!
All pain before thy presence flies:
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er thy healing beams arise.
O Jesus, nothing may I see,
Nothing desire, or seek, but Thee!

“Unwearied may I this pursue,
Dauntless to the high prize aspire;
Hourly within my breast renew
This holy flame, this heavenly fire;
And day and night be all my care,
To guard the sacred treasure there.

“In suffering, be Thy love my peace,
In weakness be Thy love my power:
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Jesus, in that important hour,
In death, as life, be Thou my guide,
And save me, who for me hast died.”

ACCORDING to the Minutes of Conference, Mr. Mitchell was appointed to the Keighley Circuit in the year 1783. This appears to have been his last station as an effective preacher. The next year his name occurs in the list of those who had retired

from the labours of the regular itinerancy, and were supported by the Preachers' Fund, as supernumeraries. In 1785 the answer to the usual question, "Who have died this year?" is, "Thomas Mitchell, an old soldier of Jesus Christ."

Mr. Mitchell is said to have been a man of slender abilities as a preacher, and to have enjoyed only a very defective education. But he was a person of deep piety, and of exemplary simplicity and zeal. A holy unction attended his earnest ministrations; and he was very successful in the conversion of ungodly men to Christ. It is said that the late Mr. Hey, of Leeds, during his connexion with the Methodists of that town, once took his friend Dr. Priestley to the chapel, to hear Mr. John Hampson, when, to his disappointment and mortification, Mr. Mitchell occupied the pulpit. After the service, Mr. Hey apologized to his learned and philosophic friend, for the absence of the popular speaker whom they had expected to hear, and for the simple and unpretending ministrations of the man by whom they had been addressed. He was soon given to understand that no apology was necessary. The doctor discerned the true character of Mr. Mitchell, and pronounced upon him the significant eulogium: "Mr. Hampson may be useful, for he is an able man, and a good preacher; but this man must do good, for he aims at nothing else."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. PETER JACO.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I AM sorry that I cannot comply with your desire so effectually as I could wish ; having left the papers containing the particulars of God's dealings with me some hundred miles off. At present I can only give you some circumstances as they occur to my memory.

I was born of serious parents, at Newlyn, near Penzance, in Cornwall, in the year 1729. When capable of learning, I was put to school, where I continued till I was near fourteen ; but, being of a gay, lively disposition, and my master being given to drink to excess, (on which account I soon learned to despise both him and his instructions,) did not make that proficiency which I otherwise might have done. As I could not endure the school under such a teacher, my father took me home, and proposed several businesses to me ; but I chose rather to be under his care, and to be employed with him in the

pilchard-fishery : first, because I knew him to be a perfect master of his business ; and, secondly, because I knew he was a truly serious man.

From my infancy, I had very serious impressions, and awful thoughts of God ; which, with the care and precepts of my parents, prevented my running into many excesses incident to youth : though in other respects I was bad enough. I was exceeding proud, passionate, and ambitious ; and so fond of pleasure, that at any time I would neglect my ordinary meals to pursue it. But amidst all my follies, I was still miserable ; and often to such a degree, that I wished I was anything but a rational creature. After many a restless night, I was ready to say, with Job, "He scareth me with dreams, and terrifieth me with visions." I frequently resolved to leave my sins : but, alas ! my goodness soon vanished away. Thus I repented and sinned ; and as I was totally ignorant where my strength lay, I was frequently at the point of giving up all striving against the torrent ; and of gratifying every passion as far as my circumstances would permit.

About the year 1746 God sent His messenger into our parts, who proclaimed free and full redemption in the blood of Christ. But though this was the very thing my conscience told me I wanted, yet I would not give up all to come to Him. No : I would dispute for His servants, fight for them, (an instance of which you, dear sir, saw the first time you preached on the green between Penzance and Newlyn, when a few lads rescued you from a wicked mob,) but I would come no nearer. However, going one Sunday night to hear Stephen Nichols, a plain, honest tinner, the word took strange hold on me, and seemed like fire in my bones. I returned filled with astonish-

ment, retired to my apartment, and, for the first time, began to take a serious review of my past life, and present situation with regard to eternity. My eyes were now truly opened. I saw myself a poor, naked, helpless sinner, without any plea, but "God be merciful to me." My convictions became more and more alarming, till I was driven to the brink of despair. And though my religious acquaintance (for I immediately joined the society) did all they could to encourage me, I would often say, "I have no hope." In this deplorable state I continued near four months, when one Sunday, (may I never forget it!) as I was attending to the exhortation before the sacrament, when the minister pronounced, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," (a very wrong translation,) "not discerning the Lord's body;" I immediately concluded, "Then I am lost for ever." Yet, through the persuasion of my father, I stayed; and I resolved, if I did perish, I would perish in the means of grace. Accordingly, in the afternoon, I set out by myself for church, a mile distant from the town, for solitude was all my comfort. I had not walked far, before it was strongly suggested to my mind, "Jesus Christ died for the vilest sinner." I immediately replied, "Then I am the wretch for whom He died!" In that moment it seemed to me as though a new creation had taken place. I felt no guilt, no distress of any kind. My soul was filled with light and love. I could no more doubt of my acceptance with God through Christ, than I could of my own existence. In this state I continued near two years, and am firmly persuaded might have still continued in it, but for my own unfaithfulness.

I was now convinced it was my duty to do all I

could for God; and, accordingly, reprov'd sin wherever I saw it, without regard to the character or station of the person; and, wherever I found a disposition to receive it, added a word of exhortation.

Some years after, my friends thought I might be more useful, if I was to exhort in the society: with much reluctance I made the attempt; but, though God blessed, in a very remarkable manner, my feeble efforts, I was with difficulty persuaded to continue it.

When you, sir, visited us in 1751, you persuaded me to enlarge my sphere, and appointed me to visit several societies. I accordingly complied, but still with unwillingness. In your next visit to Cornwall, you thought I was not so useful as I might be, and proposed my taking a Circuit. This I could by no means think of. I looked on myself as an occasional helper, having a good deal of time on my hands; and if a preacher was ill, or unable to keep his Circuit, I thought it my indispensable duty to fill his place. But, though I knew I was called to this, I could not see that I should go farther, on account of the smallness of both my gifts and grace.

In the year 1753 you proposed my going to Kingswood School: and accordingly, having settled the terms, I set out for Bristol in April, 1754; but, to my great disappointment, I found the school full, and a letter from you, desiring me to come immediately to London. This, together, with your brother's telling me, that if I returned back to my business, he should not wonder if I turned back into the world, determin'd me to comply with your desire. At the Conference in London, the 4th of May, 1754, I was appointed for the Manchester Circuit, which then took in Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and part of Yorkshire. Here God so blessed

my mean labours, that I was fully convinced He had called me to preach His Gospel. Meantime my hardships were great. I had many difficulties to struggle with. In some places the work was to begin; and in most places, being in its infancy, we had hardly the necessaries of life; so that after preaching three or four times a day, and riding thirty or forty miles, I have often been thankful for a little clean straw, with a canvas sheet, to lie on. Very frequently we had also violent oppositions. At Warrington I was struck so violently with a brick on the breast, that the blood gushed out through my mouth, nose, and ears. At Grampound I was pressed for a soldier; kept under a strong guard for several days, without meat or drink, but what I was obliged to procure at a large expense; and threatened to have my feet tied under the horse's belly, while I was carried eight miles before the commissioners: and though I was honourably acquitted by them, yet it cost me a pretty large sum of money, as well as much trouble.

For many years I was exposed to various other difficulties and dangers. But, having obtained help from God, I continue to this day! And, all thanks to Him, I wish to live and die in His service. At present I find my mind as much devoted to Him as I ever did. I see and feel the necessity of a greater conformity to Christ. May I never be satisfied till I awake up after His likeness!

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a brief account of my life, as far as my memory would assist me. If it is useful to any soul, my purpose is fully answered.

PETER JACO.

LONDON, *October 4th*, 1778.

It is stated by Mr. Atmore, that Mr. Jaco was remarkably comely in his person, tall and handsome, and possessed an amiable natural temper. His understanding was strong and clear; and he had acquired much useful knowledge, which rendered him an agreeable companion. His talents for the Christian ministry were very considerable; and he was a scribe well instructed in the things of God. In consequence of bodily indisposition, he was compelled, for several years before his death, to desist from his itinerant labours. He died in peace at Margate, in Kent; and his remains were interred in the burying-ground connected with the City-Road chapel, London; where a stone, erected to his memory, bears the following inscription:—"In memory of Mr. Peter Jaco, who died July 6th, 1781, aged fifty-two years.

'Fisher of men, ordain'd by Christ alone,
Immortal souls he for his Saviour won;
With loving faith, and calmly-potent zeal,
Perform'd and suffer'd the Redeemer's will;
Steadfast in all the storms of life remain'd,
And in the good old ship the haven gain'd.'

The following original letter of Mr. Jaco is worth preserving. It was addressed to Mrs. Hall, of London:—

"NEWLYN, NEAR PENZANCE, *Sept. 11th, 1776.*

"HAVING a few minutes of freedom from multitudes pressing on every side, to ask me how I do, and bid me welcome once more to the place of my nativity, I with pleasure embrace the opportunity of fulfilling my promise to my much-esteemed and valued friend. Perhaps it may not be unentertaining to give a brief account of my journey to this world's

end, which is upwards of three hundred miles from London.

“On Thursday, August 29th, at six o’clock in the morning, Mr. Folgham and your friend set out. We travelled hard all the day, being allowed fifteen minutes for breakfast, and twenty for dinner; but no tea, nor any supper. We arrived at Salisbury at seven o’clock; stayed half-an-hour for Mr. Folgham, who had some business to do; and then set out for Blandford, in Dorset, twenty-three miles from Salisbury, across the plain and open country, without any enclosures. The night was remarkably fine. The moon was full; and there was not a cloud in the sky to obstruct her light. Not a breath of wind was stirring, nor any living creature near, except large flocks of sheep, penned on each side of the road, whose innocent bleating, reverberating from the adjacent hills, rendered the scene awfully delightful. All the fine sentiments dispersed through the ‘Night Thoughts’ crowded upon my imagination; more especially those in the ‘Ninth Night,’ where the author has given us a picture at large, which I would recommend to your serious perusal. I was much affected with that instructive passage:—

‘Night is fair Virtue’s immemorial friend;
The conscious moon, through every distant age,
Has held a lamp to wisdom.’

“But, alas, like all transitory scenes, this pleasant night gave way to a gloomy rainy morning, when the bleak winds, coming down from the stupendous mountains, attended by impetuous floods, formed a contrast the most disagreeable.

“Nothing memorable happened till Saturday afternoon, when I had the pleasure of seeing our

worthy friend Mr. Wesley, who received me with the warmest affection.

“At Plymouth-Dock I stayed till Tuesday morning, and then set out on horseback for this place; full ninety miles. Through the infinite mercy of God, I arrived safe on Monday evening, to the great joy of an affectionate father.

“My apartment here is, perhaps, the most agreeable that you ever saw. I have two neat chambers, built upon the extreme margin of the shore. A large bay opposite my windows is twenty-one miles long and twelve wide; so that at this moment I can see nearly twenty sail of ships, and upwards of a hundred large fishing-boats, passing and repassing. Nothing on earth can be more agreeable to me. Yet I must soon part with it. I have no home but heaven. God grant that I may not fall short of it!

“I hope this will find you resolved to be a Christian indeed; determined to take heaven by violence. Nothing short of this will do. Christ cannot approve of any sacrifice but that of the heart; and not even of this, without a surrender of the whole. O, give it Him. He is worthy of it. It is His undoubted right. He has paid dearly for the purchase. Let Him have it, in God’s name. This is perhaps the most critical period of your whole life.* You have need of all your understanding and prudence. Above all, you have need of much prayer, that God may direct and keep you in every step you take.

“How long I shall stay here I know not. I have done nothing yet; and when I shall do anything I

* At this period Mrs. Hall had lately become the youthful and unencumbered widow of a negligent spendthrift. She was possessed of great personal beauty, and of sprightly conversational talent. In her second choice, she profited by the advice of her friend.

cannot tell. Perhaps I shall do nothing, after all my expense and trouble, except that of getting a few fair promises of amendment from my brothers, which may last while I am on the spot.

“Your affectionate and obliged friend,

“PETER JACO.”

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN HAIME.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

1. I WAS born at Shaftesbury, Dorsetshire, in 1710. My father followed gardening, and brought me up to the same employment for several years; but I did not like it, and longed for some business that would allow me more liberty. In the mean time, I was very undutiful to my parents, and much given to cursing, swearing, lying, and Sabbath-breaking: but I was not easy in these ungodly practices, being often afraid that the devil would carry me away.

2. I was then placed with my uncle to learn to make buttons. I liked this well at first, but was soon tired of it. However, I stayed out the year; but my uncle then removing to Blandford, I was out of business. I wrought in many places, but stayed in none; being like the troubled sea, that cannot rest. After some time, I went to my uncle at Blandford, and wrought with him about a quarter of

a year. But still I found no satisfaction in anything, neither in working, eating, drinking, nor sleeping; though neither I myself, nor any of my acquaintance, could imagine what was the matter with me.

3. Some time after, as I was working alone, the devil broke in upon me with reasonings, concerning the being of a God, till my senses were almost gone. He then so strongly tempted me to blaspheme God, that I could not withstand. He then told me, "Thou art inevitably damned:" and I readily believed him; for I thought, Though I have not cursed God outwardly, yet He looketh at the heart. This consideration made me sink into despair, as a stone in the mighty waters.

4. I now began to wander about at the river-side, and through woods and solitary places, looking up to heaven with many times a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. I thought every one happy but myself; the devil continually telling me, there was no mercy for me. Yet I thought it was hard to be banished for ever from the presence of a merciful God. I cried to Him for help, but I found no relief: it seemed to be all in vain; so I said, like the men of Judah, "There is no hope;" and then gave the reins to my evil desires; not caring which end went foremost, but giving myself up again to wicked company, and all their evil ways.

5. If at any time I grew uneasy again, I stifled it by drinking, swearing, card-playing, lewdness, and the like works of darkness, which I then pursued with all greediness. I was hastening on to eternal destruction, when the great tremendous God met me as a lion in the way; and His Holy Spirit, whom I had been so long grieving, returned with greater

force than ever. I had no rest day or night. I was afraid to go to bed, lest the devil should fetch me away before morning. I was afraid to shut my eyes, lest I should awake in hell. I was terrified when asleep, sometimes dreaming that many devils were in the room, ready to take me away; sometimes, that the world was at an end, and that I was not ready to appear before the Judge of quick and dead. At other times, I thought I saw the world on fire, and the wicked left to burn therein, with myself among them; and when I awoke, my senses were almost gone.

6. I was often on the point of destroying myself; and was stopped I know not how. Then did I weep bitterly; I mourned like a dove; I chattered like a swallow. But I thought, Though my anguish is very great, it is not like those that are lifting up their eyes in torments. Then, for a few moments, I felt thankfulness to God. But still the thoughts of death and judgment followed me closely for upwards of two years, till all my bodily strength was gone. Returning home one day, and sitting down in a chair, my mother, observing my pale look and low voice, asked, "What is the matter with you?" but I durst not tell her; so I turned it off.

7. One night as I was going to bed, I durst not lie down without prayer. So, falling upon my knees, I began to consider, "What can I pray for? I have neither the will nor the power to do anything good." Then it darted into my mind, "I will not pray, neither will I be beholden to God for mercy." I arose from my knees without prayer, and laid me down; but not in peace. I never had such a night before. I was as if my very body had been in a fire; and I had a hell in my conscience. I was tho-

roughly persuaded the devil was in the room ; and I fully expected, every moment, that he would be let loose upon me. I judged myself to be one of the worst creatures that God ever made. I thought I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy. Yet all this time I kept to the church, though I was often afraid to go there, lest the church or the tower should fall upon me.

8. In spring, I was employed by a tanner, to go with his carriage and fetch dried bark. As I was returning by myself, I was violently tempted to blaspheme, yea, and to hate God : at length, having a stick in my hand, I threw it toward heaven against God, with the utmost enmity. Immediately I saw in the clear element a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown. It flew at me, and went just over my head. Then it went about forty yards, lighted on the ground, and stood staring upon me. This was in a clear day, about twelve o'clock. I strove to pray, but I could not. At length God opened my mouth. I hastened home, praying all the way, and earnestly resolving to sin no more. But I soon forgot my resolution, and multiplied my sins as the sands on the seashore.

9. To complete all, I enlisted myself a soldier in the queen's regiment of dragoons. When we marched for Gloucester, on Christmas-day in the morning, 1739, the thoughts of parting with all my friends, my wife, and children, were ready to break my heart. My sins likewise came all to my remembrance, and my trouble increased night and day. Nevertheless, when I became acquainted with my comrades, I soon returned as a dog to the vomit. Yet God soon renewed my good desires. I began to read and pray, and to go to church every day. But

frequently I was so tempted there, that it was as much as I could do to avoid blaspheming aloud. Satan suggested, "Curse him! curse him!" perhaps a hundred times. My heart as often replied, "No! no! no!" Then he suggested, "Thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost." But I still cried unto God, though the deep waters flowed over me, and despair closed me in on every side.

10. Soon after we marched to camp at King's Clear, in Hampshire. Thence we removed to winter-quarters, at Farringdon. I was still deeply miserable through sin, but not conqueror over it. This was still my language:—

"Here I repent, and sin again;
Now I revive, and now am slain!
Slain with the same unhappy dart,
Which, O! too often wounds my heart!"

11. After this, I was quartered at Highworth, in Wiltshire. Among many old books which were here, I found one entitled, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I read it with the utmost attention, and found his case almost resembled my own. Having, soon after, orders to march for Scotland, we marched the first day to Banbury, where I found again, in a bookseller's shop, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I bought it, and thought it the best book I ever saw; and again I felt some hopes of mercy. In every town where we stayed, I went to church: but I did not hear what I wanted,—"Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

12. Being come to Alnwick, Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. And the hand of the Lord came upon me with such weight, as made me roar for very anguish of spirit. I could

truly say, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." Many times I stopped in the street, afraid to go one step farther, lest I should step into hell. Then I cried unto the Lord, and said, "Why hast Thou set me as a mark? Let loose Thy hand, and cut me off, that I sin no more against Thee." I said, "Is Thy mercy clean gone for ever? And must I perish at last? Save, Lord, or I perish!" But there was no answer; so all hope was cut off.

13. I now read, and fasted, and went to church, and prayed seven times a day. One day, as I walked by the Tweed side, I cried aloud, being all athirst for God, "O that Thou wouldest hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before Thee!" The Lord heard: He sent a gracious answer: He lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away my sorrow and fear, and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free; and had I had any to guide me, I need never more have come into bondage. But I was so ignorant, I thought I should know war no more. I began to be at ease in Sion, and forgot to watch and pray, till God laid His hand upon me again. I then again went mourning all the day long; till one Sunday, as I was going to church, I stood still like a condemned criminal before his judge, and said, "Lord, what am I going to church for? I have nothing to bring or offer Thee, but sin and a deceitful heart." I had no sooner spoken, than my heart melted within me, and I cried earnestly to Him for mercy. But suddenly something ran through my veins cold as ice. I was afraid to stay; and arose, and left the room: but

reflecting that God is above the devil, I went in again. I fell down before the Lord, with bitter cries and tears, till my strength failed me, and it was with difficulty I could walk out of the room.

14. The next morning, as I was going to water my horse, just as he entered the river, in a moment, I felt the love of God flowing into my soul. Instantly all pain and sorrow fled away. No fear of hell or the devil was left; but love to God and all mankind now filled my ravished soul. As the people with whom I quartered had often the Bible and other good books in their hands, I told them what God had done for my soul; but they understood me not. However, I doubted not but my comrade would rejoice with me, being counted a religious man. But I was disappointed again: his answer was, "Take care; for Satan can transform himself into an angel of light." Finding none who were able to give me any instruction or direction, I soon got into unprofitable reasonings, which damped my fervour; so that in a little time I was again in heaviness.

15. Soon after, I was sent with the camp-equipage to London. The next day I marched for Leith. I had scarcely set out, when God was pleased to reveal Himself in a most comfortable manner to my soul; and my comfort increased all the day, so that I hardly knew how I went. We waited for the ship seven days. During this time I was off my watch again: so that before we sailed I was weak and like another man. For two days we had pleasant weather; but on the third the wind suddenly arose, attended with furious rain. The seas frequently covered the ship, and, in the midst of our distress, broke in the hatches. I was

not, as Jonah, "asleep in the sides of the ship," but was just at my wit's end. I uttered a lifeless prayer with many tears, expecting every moment the sea to be my grave. I was grieved that I had so abused the goodness of God, and troubled beyond expression. The storm lasted two nights: then God was pleased to still the winds and seas.

16. At our arrival in London, I was somewhat refreshed in spirit, being truly thankful that I was out of hell. But I was soon in the depth of despair again, afraid of dropping into hell every moment. Soon after I went to hear Mr. Cennick, (then one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers,) at Deptford. Coming back, I told him the distress of my soul. He said, "The work of the devil is upon you;" and then rode away. It was of the tender mercies of God that I did not put an end to my life. I cried, "O Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear."

17. Yet I thought, If I must be damned myself, I will do what I can that others may be saved. So I began to reprove open sin, whenever I saw or heard it; and to warn the ungodly, that if they did not repent, they would surely perish. But if I found any that were weary and heavy-laden, I told them to wait upon the Lord, and He would renew their strength. Yet I found no strength myself, till reading one day, in what manner God manifested Himself to Mr. Cennick, I cried out, "Lord, if there be any mercy for me, reveal it to me!" I was answered by so strong an impression on my heart as left me without a doubt,—“I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” Immediately my soul melted within me, and I was filled with joy unspeakable.

18. Having joined my regiment again, we marched to Colchester. Here I found much peace, and com-

munion with God, which humbled me to the dust. Our next remove was to Brentford, where I had the happiness of hearing Mr. Charles Wesley preach. When the service was over, I had a great desire of speaking to him, but knew not how to be so bold. Yet, taking courage, I ventured to tell him my situation of mind. He gave me much encouragement, and bade me go on and not fear, neither be dismayed at any temptation. His words sunk deep, and were a great blessing to me for several years.

19. Soon after, we had an order to march for Flanders. This threw me into fresh reasoning. The thought of leaving my country, and the danger ensuing by sea and land, sat heavily upon my spirit. I soon lost my peace, nay, and my hope too. I knew I had "tasted of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come." Yet this gave me no comfort. Nay, it aggravated my sorrow, to think of losing all that God had done for me. But the more I struggled the deeper I sunk, till I was quite swallowed up of sorrow. And though I cried unto God, yea, with strong cries and tears, yet for a long time I had no comfortable answer.

20. For a long time I was so dejected and confused, that I had no heart to keep a regular account of anything. In this state I was when we embarked for Flanders, in June, 1742, and as long as we stayed there. It was on February 18th, 1743, that we began our march from Ghent to Germany. When I came to my quarters, my heart was ready to break, thinking I was upon the very brink of hell. We halted six days, and then marched again. The day following, as soon as I had mounted my horse, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart.

I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins; and felt "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." This I enjoyed about three weeks, but then lost it by grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I then walked about much cast down, and knew not what to do. But, April 22d, the Lord showed me that I did not live as became the Gospel of Christ: I was greatly ashamed before God. In the evening, as I was walking in the fields with a heavy heart, I prayed earnestly to God that He would smite the rock, and cause the waters to flow. He answered my prayer. My head was as waters, and my eyes as a fountain of tears. I wept, I sang; I had such a sense of the love of God as surpasses all description. Well might Solomon say, "Love is strong as death." Now I saw I had "a right to the tree of life;" and I knew if I then put off the body, I should enter into eternal life.

21. Feeling I wanted help both from God and man, I wrote to Mr. Wesley, who sent me a speedy answer, as follows:—

"It is a great blessing, whereof God has already made you a partaker: but if you continue waiting upon Him, you shall see greater things than these. This is only the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, which He will set up in your heart. There is yet behind the fulness of the mind that was in Christ; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is but a little thing that men should be against you, while you know that God is on your side. If He give you any companion in the narrow way, it is well; and it is well if He do not. So much the more will He teach and strengthen you by Himself: He will strengthen you in the secret of your heart; and by and by He will raise up, as it were, out of

the dust, those who shall say, 'Come, and let us magnify His name together.' But by all means, miss no opportunity. Speak and spare not: declare what God has done for your soul: regard not worldly prudence: be not ashamed of Christ, or of His word, or of His servants: speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation; and all things shall work together for good, until the work of God is perfect in your soul."

22. We now marched on through a pleasant country; and my soul was full of peace. I did speak, and spare not, with little interruption. Only at one time, when I was speaking of the goodness of God, one of our officers (and one that was accounted a very religious man!) told me, "You deserve to be cut in pieces, and to be given to the devil." But I was enabled (blessed be God) to love, pity, and pray for him.

23. After a long and tiresome march, we arrived at Dettingen. Here we lay in camp for some time, very near the French; only the river Mayne ran between us. June 16th, I was ordered out on the grand guard with all expedition. When we came to the place appointed, I saw many of the French army marching on the other side of the river. It was not long before I heard the report of a French cannon. I said, "We shall have a battle to-day;" but my comrades did not believe me. Presently I heard another, and then a third: the ball came along by us. Many of the French had crossed the river, and many more were in full march towards it. We had orders to return with all speed. The firing increased very fast: and several were killed, or wounded; some by the cannon-balls, some by the limbs of the

trees which the balls cut off. Meantime we marched on one side of the river ; part of the French army on the other. The battle was soon joined with small arms as well as cannon, on both sides. It was very bloody : thousands, on each side, were sent to their long home. I had no sooner joined the regiment than my left-hand man was shot dead. I cried to God, and said, "In Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded." My heart was filled with love, peace, and joy, more than tongue can express. I was in a new world. I could truly say, "Unto you that believe He is precious." I stood the fire of the enemy seven hours. And when the battle was over, I was sent out with a party of men to find the baggage-wagons, but returned without success. In the meanwhile the army was gone, and I knew not which way. I went to the field where the battle was fought, but such a scene of human misery did I never behold ! It was enough to melt the most obdurate heart. I knew not now which way to take, being afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy. But as it began to rain hard, I set out, though not knowing where to go ; till hearing the beat of the drum, I went towards it, and soon rejoined the army. But I could not find the tent which I belonged to, nor persuade them to take me in at any other. So, being very wet and much fatigued, I wrapped myself up in my cloak, and lay down and fell asleep. And though it still rained upon me, and the water ran under me, I had as sweet a night's rest as ever I had in my life.

24. We had now to return from Germany to Flanders, to take up our winter-quarters. In our march, we were some time near the river Mayne. Twenty miles from the field of battle, we saw the

dead men lie in the river, and on the bank, as dung upon the earth. Many of the French, attempting to pass the river after we had broken down the bridge, were drowned, and many cast upon the banks, where there was none to bury them.

25. Being in Ghent, I went one Sunday morning to the English church at the usual time. But neither minister nor people came. As I was walking in the church, two men belonging to the train came in, John Evans and Pitman Stag. One of them said, "The people are long in coming." I said, "Yet they think, however they live, of going to heaven when they die. But most of them, I fear, will be sadly disappointed." They stared at me, and asked me what I meant. I told them, "Nothing unholy can dwell with a holy God." We had a little more talk, and appointed to meet in the evening. I found John Evans a strict Pharisee, "doing justly, and loving mercy," but knowing nothing of "walking humbly with his God." But the cry of Pitman Stag was, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" We took a room without delay, and met every night to pray and read the holy Scriptures. In a little time we were as speckled birds, as "men wondered at." But some began to listen under the window, and soon after desired to meet with us. Our meetings were soon sweeter than our food; and I found therein such an enlargement of soul, and such an increase of spiritual knowledge, that I resolved to go, come life, or come death.

26. We had now twelve joined together, several of whom had already found peace with God: the others were earnestly following after it; and it was not long before they attained. Hereby new love and zeal were kindled in us all; and although Satan assaulted us

various ways, yet were we enabled to discern all his wiles, and to withstand all his power. Several of them are now safely landed on the blissful shore of a glorious immortality; where, as a weather-beaten bark, worn out with storms, may I, at last, happily arrive, and find the children whom God has been graciously pleased to give me through the word of His power.

27. One night after our meeting, I told the people, we should have the room full before we left the city. We soon increased to about twenty members; and love increased so, that shame and fear vanished away. Our singing was heard afar off, and we regarded not those who made no account of our labours. Such was the increase of our faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, that we had no barren meetings. Such was our love to each other, that even the sight of each other filled our hearts with divine consolation. And as love increased among us, so did convictions among others; and in a little time we had a large society. So that now (as I had told them before) the room was too small to hold the people.

28. May 1st, 1744, we marched from Ghent, and encamped near Brussels. Our camp lay to the side of a hill: we set up our standing on a hill just opposite. We were easily heard by the soldiers in the camp; who soon began to "fly as a cloud, and as doves to the windows." Here I gathered together my scattered sheep and lambs. They were the joy of my heart; and I trust to find them again among that "great multitude that no man can number." O what a work did God put into my hands! And who is sufficient for these things? But God had given me such a faith, that had I continued steadfast

in the grace of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor any creature, could have hindered my growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ unto my dying hour.

29. I took great delight in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. I read it over and over, and prayed much for faith. This was first in the day, and last at night, in my mind; and I had no more doubt of the promises contained therein, than if God had called to me from heaven, and said, "This is My word, and it shall stand for ever." When I began preaching, I did not understand one text in the Bible, so as to speak from it in (what is called) a regular manner; yet I never wanted either matter or words. So hath God, in all ages, "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." I usually had a thousand hearers, officers, common soldiers, and others. Was there ever so great a work before, in so abandoned an army? But we can only say, there is nothing too hard for God! He worketh what, and by whom, He pleaseth.

30. I was now put to a stand. I had so much duty to do, the society to take care of, and to preach four or five times a day, that it was more than I could well perform. But God soon took care for this also. I looked for no favour from man: I wanted nothing from man: I feared nothing: God did so increase my love and zeal. Light and heat filled my soul, and it was my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father. I cried earnestly to Him to clear my way and remove all hindrances. Glory be to His name! He did so: for two years after this time I was entirely at my liberty. I found means of hiring others to do my duty, which proved an unspeakable advantage. The work was great before;

but we soon found a greater increase of it than ever. If Christianity consist in love and obedience to God, and love to all men, friends and enemies, we had now got a Christian society: we had the good land in possession. But this was not enough: still there was an earnest cry in our souls for all the mind that was in Christ, as there was in David for "the water of the well at Bethlehem."

31. Our general method was, as soon as we were settled in any camp, to build a tabernacle, containing two, three, or four rooms, as we saw convenient. One day three officers came to see our chapel, as they called it. They asked many questions: one in particular asked me what I preached. I answered, "I preach against swearing, whoring, and drunkenness; and exhort men to repent of all their sins, that they may not perish." He began swearing horribly, and said, if it were in his power, he would have me whipped to death. I told him, "Sir, you have a commission over men; but I have a commission from God to tell you, you must either repent of your sins, or perish everlastingly." He went away, and I went on, being never better than when I was preaching or at prayer. For the Lord gave such a blessing to His word, that I thought every discourse lost, under which no one was either convinced or converted to God.

32. We had now three hundred in the society, and six preachers, besides myself. It was therefore no wonder that many of the officers and chaplains endeavoured to stop the work. But it was altogether lost labour. He that sitteth in heaven laughed them to scorn. And I doubt not but He would have given me strength to suffer death, rather than have given them up.

33. It was reported by many that I was utterly distracted. Others endeavoured to incense the field-marshal against me. I was examined several times; but, blessed be God! He stood by me, and encouraged me to go on, to speak, and not to hold my peace; neither did He suffer any man to set upon me to hurt me. And so great were my love and joy in believing, that they carried me above all those things which would otherwise have been grievous to flesh and blood; so that all was pleasant to me:—

“The winter’s night and summer’s day
Fled imperceptibly away.”

I frequently walked between twenty and thirty miles a day; and preached five-and-thirty times in the space of seven days. So great was my love to God, and to the souls which He had purchased with His own blood. Many times I have forgotten to take my refreshment for ten hours together. I had at this time three armies against me: the French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils. But I feared them not; for my life was hid with Christ in God. He supported me through all: and I trust He will be my God and my guide even unto death.

34. While the work of God thus flourished among the English, He visited also the Hanoverian army. A few of them began to meet together, and their number increased daily. But they were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severely punished, the rest did not dare to disobey. It is clear the devil and the world will suffer any man to be anything but a real Christian!

35. My present comrade was an extremely wicked man. He came home one day, cursing and swearing,

that he had lost his money. He searched for it, and, after some time, found it. He threw it on the table, and said, "There is my ducat; but no thanks to God, any more than to the devil." I wrote down the words, and complained to our commanding officer. After a few days he was tried by a court-martial. The officer asked what I had to say against him. I gave him the words in writing. When he had read them, he asked me if I were not ashamed to take account of such a matter as this. I answered, "No, sir: if I had heard such words spoken against His Majesty King George, would not you have counted me a villain if I had concealed them?" His mouth was stopped, and the man cried for pardon! The captain told him he was worthy of death by the law of God and man; and asked me what I desired to have done. I answered, I desired only to be parted from him, and I hoped he would repent. Orders were given that we should be parted. This also was matter of great thankfulness.

36. From camp we removed to our winter-quarters at Bruges. Here we had a lively society; but our preaching-room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship, called the English church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer. I went to his house, and begged to have leave to speak to him. He told me, if I had business with him, I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him, I had the liberty of speaking to the Duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted. I said, "Please your honour, I come to beg a great favour: that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the wrath to come." He was very angry,

and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks. He asked, "But how came you to preach?" I said, "The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow-sinners to repentance." He said, "Then you must restrain that Spirit." I told him, "I would die first." He said, "You are in my hand," and turned away in a great rage.

37. I cried to the Lord for more faith, that I might never deny Him, whatsoever I was called to suffer, but might own Him before men and devils; and very soon after, God removed this hindrance out of the way: General Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and General Ponsonby took his place. I went to his house, and was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, "I come to beg your honour will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God." He asked, "What religion are you of?" I answered, "Of the Church of England." "Then," said he, "you shall have it." I went to the clerk for the keys; but he said the chaplains forbade it, and I should not have them. The general then gave me an order under his own hand, so that they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town,—"Preaching every day, at two o'clock, in the English church." And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townsfolk.

38. We had some good singers among us, and one in particular, who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear the word. One Sunday, the clerk gave out a psalm: it was sung in a hymn tune; and sung so well, that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed to go

all together to church every Sunday. On the next Sunday we began ; and when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers, singing together with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such a life to the ordinance, that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

39. The spring following, we took the field again : and on May 11th, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. Some days before, one of our brethren, standing at his tent-door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand ; and, when he went into the field of battle, declared, " I am going to rest in the bosom of Jesus." Indeed, this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them His mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight as made the officers, as well as soldiers, amazed. When wounded, some cried out, " I am going to my Beloved." Others, " Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly !" And many that were not wounded earnestly desired " to be dissolved and to be with Christ." When W. Clements had his arm broken by a musket-ball, they would have carried him out of the battle ; but he said, " No ; I have an arm left to hold my sword : I will not go yet." When a second shot broke his other arm, he said, " I am as happy as I can be out of paradise." John Evans, having both his legs taken off by a cannon-ball, was laid across a cannon to die : where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips.

40. For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for about seven hours. But I told my

comrades, "The French have no ball made that will kill me this day." After about seven hours, a cannon-ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, "Haime, where is your God now?" I answered, "Sir, He is here with me; and He will bring me out of this battle." Presently a cannon-ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, "Haime is gone!" But I replied, "He is not gone yet." I soon disengaged myself, and walked on, praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse: but that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way lay multitudes bleeding, groaning, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace; but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me: I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field, I met one of our brethren with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled, and said, "Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound." I asked, "Have you got Christ in your heart?" He said, "I have; and I have had Him all this day. I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of God; but I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies!" Among the dead there were great plenty of watches, and of gold and silver. One asked me, "Will not you get something?" I answered, "No; I have got Christ. I will have no plunder."

41. But the greatest loss I sustained was that of my fellow-labourers. William Clements was sent to the hospital. John Evans, brothers Bishop and

Greenwood, were killed in the battle. Two others, who used to speak boldly, fell into Antinomianism. So I was left alone: but I was persuaded this also was for my good. And seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many waxing cold, it added wings to my devotion. And my faith grew daily, as a tree planted by the water-side.

42. One of these Antinomian preachers professed to be always happy, but was frequently drunk twice a day. One Sunday, when I was five or six miles off, he took an opportunity of venting his devilish opinions. One hasted after me, and begged me to return. I did so; but the mischief was done. He had convinced many that we had nothing to do with the law, either before or after our conversion. When I came in, the people looked greatly confused: I perceived there was a great rent in the society; and, after preaching and prayer, said, "You that are for the old doctrine, which you have heard from the beginning, follow me." Out of the three hundred, I lost about fifty; but the Lord soon gave me fifty more. The two Antinomians set up for themselves, until lying, drunkenness, and many other sins, destroyed both preachers and people, all but a few that came back to their brethren.

43. We had no sacrament administered in the army for a long season. I was greatly troubled, and complained aloud in the open camp of the neglect. The chaplains were exceedingly displeased; but the Duke of Cumberland, hearing of it, ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day, to one regiment or the other.

44. The duke, hearing many complaints of me, inquired who I was; if I did my duty, if I would fight, and if I prayed for a blessing on the king and

his arms: they told his royal highness, I did all this as well as any man in the regiment. He asked, "Then what have you to say against him?" They said, "Why, he prays and preaches so much, that there is no rest for him." Afterwards the duke talked with me himself, and asked me many questions. He seemed so well satisfied with my answers, that he bade me "go on;" and gave out a general order that I should preach anywhere, and no man should molest me.

45. I was preaching one day, when the duke, unknown, came to hear me. I that day desired the soldiers never to come there, or to any place of public worship, so as to neglect any duty. I exhorted them to be ready at all calls, and to obey those who had the rule over them; and if called out to battle, to stand fast, yea, if needful, fight up to the knees in blood. I said, "You fight for a good cause, and for a good king, and in defence of your country. And this is no way contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy; when both you and I did our duty, and were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

46. I had now for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man; and for nearly three years I had known that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins. I had enjoyed the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all conditions: wet and weary, cold and hungry, I was happy; finding a daily increase in faith and love. I had constant communion with the Father and the Son. It was my delight to do good to them that hated me, and to call all sinners to "behold the Lamb of God,

which taketh away the sin of the world." But O! "how did the mighty fall, and the weapons of war perish!" April 6th, 1746, I was off my watch, and fell by a grievous temptation. It came as quick as lightning: I knew not if I were in my senses; but I fell, and the Spirit of God departed from me. It was a great mercy that I did not fall into hell! Blessed be God for that word, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But it was twenty years before I found Him to be an Advocate for me with the Father again.

47. My fall was both gradual and instantaneous. I first grew negligent in watching and prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. I then indulged myself more and more; laying out upon my own appetite what I before gave to my poor brethren. I next began to indulge the lust of my eyes, to look at and covet pleasing things; till, by little and little, I became shorn of my strength, "having left my former love." For many years I had scrupled buying or selling the least thing on the Lord's day. The 6th of April was on a Sunday. That day I was at Antwerp for forage: several of my comrades desired me to buy them some things, which accordingly I did. I had an inward check, but I overruled it, and quickly after became a prey to the enemy. Instantly my condemnation was so great, that I was on the point of destroying myself: God restrained me from this; but Satan was let loose, and followed me by day and by night. The agony of my mind weighed down my body, and threw me into a bloody flux. I was carried to a hospital, just dropping into hell. But the Lord upheld me with an unseen hand, quivering over the great gulf.

48. Before my fall, my sight was so strong, that I could look steadfastly on the sun at noon-day. But after it, I could not look a man in the face, nor bear to be in any company. Indeed, I thought myself far more fit for the society of devils than of men; everything was a burden to me, and grievous to be borne. The roads, the hedges, the trees, everything seemed cursed of God. Nature appeared void of God, and in the possession of the devil. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field all seemed in league against me. I had not one ray of hope, but a fearful looking-for of fiery indignation. Very frequently Judas was represented to me as hanging just before me. Had I been cut with knives from head to foot, I could not have been more sore in my flesh than I was in my spirit. How true is it, "The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear!"

49. I clearly saw the unshaken faith, the peace, joy, and love which I had cast away, and felt the return of pride, anger, self-will, and every other devilish temper. And I knew, by melancholy experience, that my last state was worse than the first. I was one day drawn into the woods, lamenting my forlorn state, and on a sudden I began to weep bitterly. From weeping I fell to howling, like a wild beast, so that the woods resounded. Yet could I say, notwithstanding my bitter cries, "My stroke is heavier than my groaning." Nevertheless, I could not say, "Lord, have mercy upon me," if I could have purchased heaven thereby.

50. So great was the displeasure of God against me, that He, in a great measure, took away the sight of my eyes. I could not see the sun for more than eight months: even in the clearest summer-

day, it always appeared to me like a mass of blood. At the same time I lost the use of my knees. I cannot describe what I felt. I could truly say, "Thou hast sent fire into my bones." I was often as hot as if I were burning to death: many times I looked to see if my clothes were set on fire. I have gone into a river to cool myself; but it was all the same. For what could quench the wrath of His indignation that was let loose upon me? At other times, in the midst of summer, I have been so cold, that I knew not how to bear it. All the clothes I could put on had no effect, but my flesh shivered, and my very bones quaked. God grant, reader, thou and I may never feel how hot or how cold it is in hell!

51. I was afraid to pray; for I thought the die was cast, and my damnation sealed. So I thought, it availed not if all the saints upon earth, and all the angels in heaven, should intercede for me. I was angry at God, angry at myself, and angry at the devil. I thought I was possessed with more devils than Mary Magdalene. I cannot remember that I had one comfortable hope for seven years together. Only while I was preaching to others, my distress was a little abated. But some may inquire, What could move me to preach while I was in such a forlorn condition? They must ask of God, for what I cannot tell: His ways herein are past my finding out.

52. In all my trials, I have, by the grace of God, invariably kept to one point, preaching "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ:" testifying, that "by grace are ye saved through faith: that now is the day of salvation;" and that this salvation is for all; that Christ "tasted death

for every one." I always testified, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and that if any, though ever so holy, "draw back," they will perish everlastingly. I continually expected this would be my lot: yet, after some years, I attempted again to pray. With this Satan was not well pleased; for one day, as I was walking alone, and faintly crying for mercy, suddenly such a hot blast of brimstone flashed in my face, as almost took away my breath. And presently after, as I was walking, an invisible power struck up my heels, and threw me violently upon my face.

53. When we came to Holland, I had now and then a spark of hope. One Sunday I went to church, where the Lord's supper was to be administered. I had a great desire to partake of it; but the enemy came in like a flood to hinder me, pouring in temptations of every kind. I resisted him with my might, till, through the agony of my mind, the blood gushed out of my mouth and nose. However, I was enabled to conquer, and to partake of the blessed elements. So I still waited on God in the way of His judgments, and He led me in a way I had not known.

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still, having no comfortable sense of the presence and favour of God.

55. I had heard of an old experienced Christian at Rotterdam. I went to see him; and found him in an upper room, furnished like that which the Shunammite prepared for Elisha. He looked at me, but did not speak one word. However, I told him a little of my experience. He looked earnestly at me, and began to speak, and tell me all his heart. He said, he had lived for several years in the favour and love of God, when, thinking himself stronger than he was, Satan got an advantage over him. The Holy Spirit departed from him: his strength was gone, and he knew not where to flee for refuge. For ten years sin held him in its iron bondage, and in inexpressible anguish and despair. But one day, as he was making his complaint to God, on a sudden, light broke in; sorrow fled away, and his soul was like Amminadib. The change was so great, that he was utterly lost in wonder, love, and praise. He knew God had "created a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him." And he had now lived thirty years without one doubt of what God had wrought. This gave me considerable satisfaction; but it lasted only a short time.

56. When we were going, for winter-quarters, into a town in Holland, I was sent thither before our troops. A gentleman sent for me, and asked if I knew John Haime. I said, "I am the man." He said, "A gentlewoman in the town wants to speak with you." I went to her house, and she bade me welcome. After a little conversation, she asked me, "Do you believe that Christ died for all the world?" Upon my answering, "I do," she replied, "I do not believe one word of it. But as you know He died

for you, and I know He died for me, we will only talk of His love to poor sinners." We were soon as well acquainted as if we had lived together many years, and her house became my home. I asked, how many she had in family: she said, seven, beside herself. I asked, "What is to become of all these, that you are so easy about them?" She said, "The Lord will call them in His due time, if they belong to Him." I asked, "Shall we pray for them?" She said, "Yes;" so I began that evening. In a few days, the servant-maid was cut to the heart; next, one of her sons was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. And before we left the town, the whole family were athirst for salvation. When the time of our marching drew near, she was in great trouble; but there was no help: so we took our leave of each other, to meet no more till the morning of the resurrection.

57. At another time I was quartered at Meerkirk, in Holland, at a young woman's whose father and mother were lately dead. She had many cattle, some of which died daily of the distemper; but she never murmured. I never before met with a woman so ready in the Scriptures. I could not mention any text but she would readily tell the meaning of it: so that it was no wonder she was thought by others, as well as by herself, to be a prime Christian. I was almost of the same mind at first; but when I had narrowly observed her, I was thoroughly convinced she was deceived, and judged it my duty to undeceive her. I told her, "You are not born of God: you have not living faith." She heard me with much composure of mind; but she did not believe me. I continued for three weeks pressing it upon her at all opportunities. And one evening, the

Lord made a few words which I spoke sharper than a two-edged sword. Conviction so fastened upon her heart that she was soon obliged to take to her bed. She lay about seven days in deep distress. She then had a comfortable hope; and this strengthened her body for a few days. But then her convictions returned so heavily, that she was obliged to take her bed again, in great agony of mind. The townspeople were alarmed, and ran in crowds to inquire what was the matter; what could distress her, who had enough of the world's wealth, and was so good a woman? But they gave her no satisfaction. As soon as they were gone, she immediately called for me, and cried out, "O John, I shall go to hell; the devil will carry me away." I said, "No! you shall not go to hell! The Lord died for poor sinners." She lay in this distress about ten days, and was brought to the gates of death. But the good Samaritan then passed by, poured wine and oil into her wounds, and healed both soul and body; so that she broke out, "Jehovah is my strength and my song. He is my salvation! Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul."

58. I now thought it would be a great blessing both to herself and her neighbours, if she would pray with them. She agreed so to do. I commonly prayed first, and she afterwards. Sometimes she prayed half an hour together; and often with such demonstration of the Spirit, as well as such understanding, that the whole house seemed full of the presence of the Lord. At other times she wept like a child, and said, "Lord, what is this that Thou hast done? Thou hast sent a man from another nation as an instrument of saving me from ruin! I was rich

before, and increased in goods, and knew not that I was blind and naked." Many of her friends and neighbours were concerned for her ; but not so much as she was for them, as well knowing they were seeking death in the error of their life. This she declared to them without reserve ; and the publishing this strange doctrine spread our names far and near, not only through the town, but the adjacent country. This brought many from distant towns to see her, who usually returned blessing God for the consolation. Some came upwards of twenty miles in a morning. After breakfast, I used to pray first ; and she went on. Many of our visitants were much affected, and wept bitterly. And the impression did not soon wear off. By this means, we became acquainted with many of the Christians in Holland. They were a free, loving people. So we found them ; and so did many of the Methodist soldiers : for they gave them house-room and firing freely. And is not the promise of the Lord sure ?—"Whoever shall give unto one of these a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward."

59. All this time I was still buffeted with sore temptations. I thought I was worse than Cain ; that I had "crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame." In rough weather, it was often suggested to me, "This is on your account ! See, the earth is cursed for your sake ; and it will be no better till you are in hell." I expected soon to be a prey for devils, as I was driven from all the happiness I once enjoyed. Frequently the trouble of my mind made me so weak in body, that it was with the greatest difficulty I performed my exercise. The Lord had indeed given me "a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind ; and my life did hang in

doubt before me, and I feared day and night, having no assurance of my life." Often did I wish I had never been converted; often that I had never been born. Sometimes I could not bear the sight of a good man without pain; much less be in his company. Yet I preached every day, and endeavoured to appear open and free to my brethren. I encouraged them that were tempted, "not to fear; the Lord would soon appear for Himself." Meantime, I continued to thunder out the terrors of the law against the ungodly; although some said I was too positive. Too positive! What! in declaring the promises and threatenings of God? Nay, if I cannot be sure of these, I will say to the Bible, as the devil did to our Lord, "What have I to do with Thee?"

60. At one time, I cannot remember that I had any particular temptation for some weeks. Now I thought God had forsaken me, and the devil had no need to trouble himself about me. He then set the case of Francis Spira before me, so that I sunk into black despair. Everything seemed to make against me. I could not open the Bible anywhere but it condemned me. I was much distressed with dreams and visions of the night. I dreamed one night that I was in hell: another, that I was on Mount Etna; that on a sudden it shook and trembled exceedingly; and that at last it split asunder in several places, and sunk into the burning lake,—all but that little spot on which I stood. O, how thankful was I for my preservation! And this continued for awhile, even after I awoke: but then it fled away as a dream.

61. I was often violently tempted to curse, and swear, and blaspheme, before and after, and even while I was preaching. Sometimes, when I was in the midst of the congregation, I could hardly refrain

from laughing aloud, yea, from uttering all kinds of ribaldry and filthy conversation. I thought there was none that loved me now, none that had any concern for my soul ; but that God had taken away from everybody the affection which they once had. I cried out, "I have sinned ! What shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Preserver of men ? Why hast Thou set me as a mark against Thee, so that I am a burden to myself ?" I said, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath." Frequently, as I was going to preach, the devil has set upon me as a lion, telling me, he would have me just then ; so that it has thrown me into a cold sweat. In this agony, I have catched hold of the Bible and read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I have said to the enemy, "This is the word of God, and thou canst not deny it." Hereat he would be like a man that shrunk back from the thrust of a sword. But he would be at me again. I again met him in the same way, till at last (blessed be God !) he fled from me. And even in the midst of the sharpest assaults, God gave me just strength enough to bear them. He fulfilled His word, "My grace is sufficient for thee : My strength is made perfect in thy weakness." When Satan has strongly suggested, just as I was going to preach, "I will have thee at last," I have answered, (sometimes with too much anger,) "I will have another out of thy hand first." And many, while I was myself in the deep, were truly convinced, and converted to God.

62. When I returned to England, and was discharged from the army, I went to Mr. Wesley, and asked if he would permit me to labour with him as a travelling preacher. He was willing : so I immedi-

ately went into a Circuit. But this was far from delivering me from that inexpressible burden of soul under which I still laboured. Hence it was that I could neither be satisfied with preaching nor without it; and that wherever I went, I was not able to stay long in one place; but continually wandered to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none. On this account, many thought me very unstable, and looked very coldly upon me, as they were wholly unacquainted with the exercises of soul which I laboured under. I thought if David or Peter had been living, they would have pitied me. But many of my friends had not even tasted of that bread and water of affliction, which had been my meat and drink for many years. May they walk so humbly and closely with God that they may never taste it!

63. After I had continued some time as a travelling preacher, Mr. Wesley took me to travel with him. He knew I was fallen from my steadfastness; but he knew, likewise, how to bear with me. And when I was absent, he comforted me by his letters, which were a means, under God, of saving me from utter despair. One of them was as follows:—

“LONDON, *June 21st*, 1748.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“THINK it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which God has seen good to try you with. Indeed, the chastisement for the present is not joyous, but grievous: nevertheless it will, by and by, bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is good for you to be in the fiery furnace: though the flesh be weary of it, you shall be purified therein, but not consumed. For there is One with you, whose form is as the Son of God. O, look up! Take knowledge

of Him who spreads underneath you His everlasting arms! Lean upon Him with the whole weight of your soul! He is yours!—Lay hold upon Him!

‘Away let grief and sighing flee;
Jesus hath died for thee, for thee.’

“Mercy and peace shall not forsake you. Through every threatening cloud look up; and wait for happy days.”

64. In this miserable condition I went to Shaftesbury to see my friends, and spent several days. When one and another came and asked me, what news, I told them, “Good news!—Christ died to save sinners.” But it seemed to them as an idle tale: they “cared for none of these things.” One day, being half asleep, I was, as it were, thunder-struck with an inward voice, saying, “What doest thou here?” I cried to the Lord for mercy, and gave notice, that on the Sunday following, I would preach in a place at the end of the town, where four ways met. The town and villages round were soon alarmed; and at the time appointed, I believe there were three or four thousand people. My inward trouble seemed suspended. I got upon a wall about seven feet high, and began with prayer. I then gave out my text: “Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” (Mal. iv. 1.) Surely I preached that sermon with the power of the Holy Spirit sent down for heaven. Twelve, if not fourteen, were then convinced of sin; some of whom are, I trust, long ago, safely lodged in

Abraham's bosom. In a few weeks, fifty persons were joined together in society. I now preached in a large room several times a week. But the people were eager to build a house, and appointed a time of meeting to consider of the means; but on that day I was taken up, and put in prison, two men having sworn flatly against me that I had made a riot. After I had been in prison a night and part of a day, I was taken to a public-house. It was soon full of people: I immediately began preaching to them; and the lions quickly became lambs. A messenger then came in, to let me know that I must appear before the mayor and aldermen. I did so. The town-clerk told me, they would not send me to Dorchester gaol if I would work a miracle. I told them, "That is done already. Many swearers and drunkards are become sober, God-fearing men." A lawyer said, "Well, if you will take my advice, you shall not go to prison." I replied, "I suppose you mean, if I will give over preaching: but that I dare not do." I was then, without any more ado, hurried away to Dorchester.

65. My body was now in prison; but that had been a thing of little consequence, had not my soul remained in prison also,—in the dungeon of despair. The gaoler soon came, and fell into conversation with me; but when I began to preach Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, he quickly left me to preach to my fellow-prisoners. Many of these, having no righteousness of their own to bring to God, were willing to hear of being saved by grace. So I preached to them several times while I was in prison, and they seemed greatly affected. Meantime, God raised up two Quakers at Shaftesbury, who became bound for my appearance at the Quarter Sessions. I

had been in prison but eight days, when one of these came to fetch me out, and brought money to pay the prison-fees and all other expenses. Had I not been put into prison, it is likely some of these prisoners would never have heard the Gospel. I saw, therefore, that God did all things well. Being come back, I began preaching again; and God was present with the people. I soon received a letter from a gentleman at London, bidding me employ two counsellors and an attorney, and draw upon him for whatever money I wanted. I carried this letter to the post-master, and asked him if he were willing to let me have money upon it: he said, "Yes, as much as you please." This was soon noised about the town: so the magistrates were glad to make up the matter. And the work of God so increased, that in a little time we had eighty in society.

66. During my great distress of mind, I went twice to Ireland as a travelling preacher; and in each passage over the sea, I was very near being cast away. October 27th, 1751, I preached at Mount-mellick. The next morning, after I had travelled about two miles, suddenly my senses failed me. I was soon insensible where I was, and where I came from. I supported myself a considerable time by a gate in the road, as I did not know which way to go, nor what place to ask for. At length my understanding returned; and I began to weep. But what I passed through, I cannot express, so unspeakable was my anguish. But the tender mercy of God supported me therein, that my spirit might not fail before Him.

67. In the beginning of September, 1766, I was living at Shaftesbury, when Mr. Wesley passing through, in his way to Cornwall, I asked if it would

be agreeable for me to be at his house in London a few days: he said, "Yes, as long as you please." But before I set out, I received the following letter:—

"ST. IVES, CORNWALL, *Sept. 16th, 1766.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I THINK you have no need to go to London: God has, it seems, provided a place for you here. Mr. Hoskins wants a worn-out preacher to live with him, to take care of his family, and to pray with them morning and evening."

I went down. As soon as Mr. Hoskins saw me, he said, "You are welcome to stay here as long as you live." But no sooner did I fix there, than I was, if possible, ten times worse than before. In vain I strove to make myself easy: the more I strove, the more miserable I was. Not that I wanted anything that this world can afford. But can this world satisfy a soul that was made for God? The distress of my mind soon became intolerable: it was a burden too heavy for me to bear. It seemed to me, that unless I got some relief, I must die in despair. One day I retired into the hall, fell on my face, and cried for mercy; but got no answer. I got up, and walked up and down the room, wringing my hands, and crying as if I should break my heart, begging of God, for Christ's sake, if there were any mercy for me, to help me: and, blessed be His name! all on a sudden, I felt such a change, through my soul and body, as is past description. I was afraid I should alarm the whole house with the expressions of my joy. I had a full witness from the Spirit of God that I should not find that bondage any more. Nor have I ever found it to this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies!

68. But, notwithstanding this wonderful change, I had not the faith which I had once. But I found a very great alteration by reading the Scriptures. The promises opened to me more and more; and I expected to find some great thing wrought upon me all at once. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. He led me by a way I had not known. He greatly deepened His work in my soul, and drove out His enemies by little and little, till I could clearly say, "Thy will be done." The lion became a lamb; and I found the truth of that word by happy experience: "Thou wilt keep his soul in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."

69. I now thought I would stay with Mr. Hoskins; for he was very kind to me. But I soon began to be so bound in spirit, that I could hardly pray in the family; nay, I could not ask a blessing on our food, without much hesitation and stammering. And all the comforts of life, which were then in great plenty, became altogether comfortless. Mr. Story being then in the round, I made my complaint to him. He desired me to take his place for a month, while he went into the east of Cornwall. This I gladly undertook; and although, for the space of three weeks, my coat was not once dry upon my back, yet I was warmer within, and far more comfortable, than in the warm parlour.

70. When Mr. Story returned, I thought I would stay at Mr. Hoskins's a few days, and then travel. But the first night I was as restless as ever: so in the morning I took my leave, and in January, 1767, went into the east of Cornwall. I found it was good for me to be there: my faith increased daily. And, blessed be God! I found love, and peace, and joy in

the Holy Ghost, springing up in my soul. I trust God will continue them to my dying day, and then receive me to Himself.

71. I had long been travelling in the wilderness in "a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death." This had been my lot for twenty years: a just judgment of the Almighty for my sin. Blessed be His name, that He did not wholly cast me off! But I saw clearly nothing would avail but a fresh application of the Saviour's blood to my wounded soul. I had now a happy sense of this: which, with the thoughts of His forbearance twenty years before my conversion, His filling me with His love for three years, His dealings with me in my fallen condition, and my present deliverance, caused my soul to overflow with wonder and praise for His long-suffering goodness. I saw nothing was too hard for God. I could cast myself on the Lord Jesus. All the promises in the Scriptures were full of comfort; particularly this, "I have known thee in the furnace of affliction." The Scriptures were all precious to my soul, as the rain to the thirsty land. And when Satan assaulted me afresh, I did not stand to reason with him, but fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge. Hereby the snare was soon broken, and I found an increase both of faith, hope, and love. I could now truly say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters: He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

72. It was not my intention ever to write any account of these things, had not some of my friends greatly pressed me thereto. Nevertheless, I put off

from time to time, being conscious I had no talent for writing, until my peace was well-nigh lost. At last I was prevailed upon to begin. I had not written many lines, before I found my soul in perfect peace. I found myself likewise greatly assisted to recollect the manifold dealings of God with me: so that I have the greatest reason to believe it is His will I should make known, even by these instances of His goodness, that He is "long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." May He bless the feeble attempt to the good of many! May they learn wisdom by the things that I have suffered! And be all the glory ascribed unto Him that "sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever!"

OF THE DEATH OF MR. HAIME.

BY MR. GEORGE STORY.

ON the 18th of August, 1784, at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, died that faithful soldier of Christ, Mr. John Haime, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. For more than a twelvemonth past, his health visibly declined. A hectic fever, which continually increased, soon reduced him to skin and bone ; nevertheless, his zeal for the glory of God, and concern for the salvation of sinners, abated not in the least. He preached as long as he was able to speak, and longer than he could stand without support.

On the Sunday before his death he requested the society to attend him in his own room ; and for several minutes powerfully and affectionately exhorted them to persevere to the end, in that faith which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart.

The morning he died, in attempting to get out of bed, he fell down, and was much hurt ; which occasioned violent pain. In about two hours after, the pain being a little abated, he desired to be raised up in bed : and after shaking hands with five or six friends who were present, he prayed for the Divine blessing upon them separately ; then for the church in general ; and, lastly, for the little flock over which he had long been overseer. He then leaned back in bed ; and although the pain was not so intense, yet

there were evident tokens of his approaching dissolution. His strength gradually decreased, and his sight and speech in a great measure failed. Yet he frequently broke out in prayer, in these and such like sentences:—"O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, and have not been confounded. In Thee do I now trust; let me never be confounded. Salvation is of the Lord. I have nothing to bring or to offer unto the Lord, but 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' When my soul departs from this body, a convoy of angels will conduct me to the paradise of God." His last prayer that could be understood was to this effect: "O Almighty God, who dwellest in light, which no mortal can approach, and where no unclean thing can enter, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts; grant us continually sweet peace, quietness, and assurance of Thy favour!" About an hour before his decease, he was heard to say, "This is a good way! O that all may tread this path in the important hour!" Presently after, he departed so quietly, that it was scarcely perceivable when he drew his last breath.

WHITCHURCH, *September 1st, 1784.*

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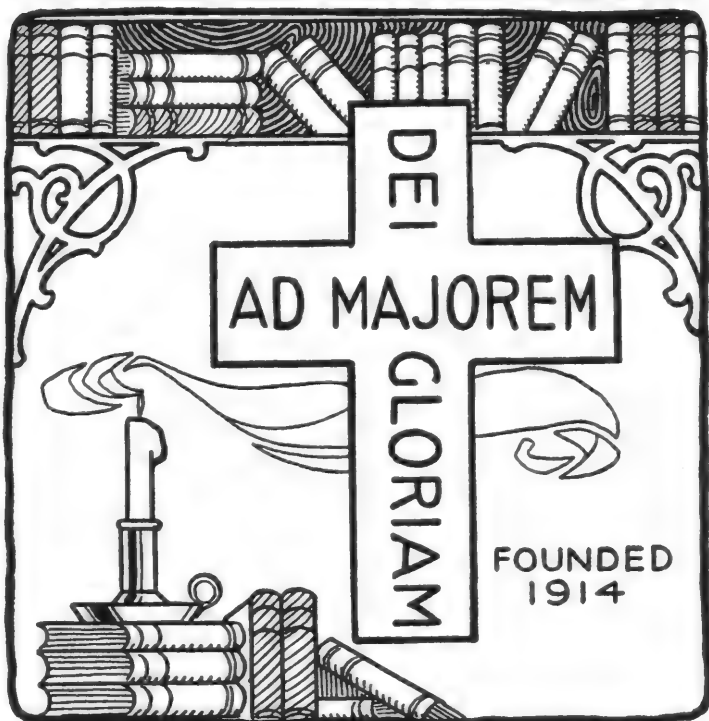
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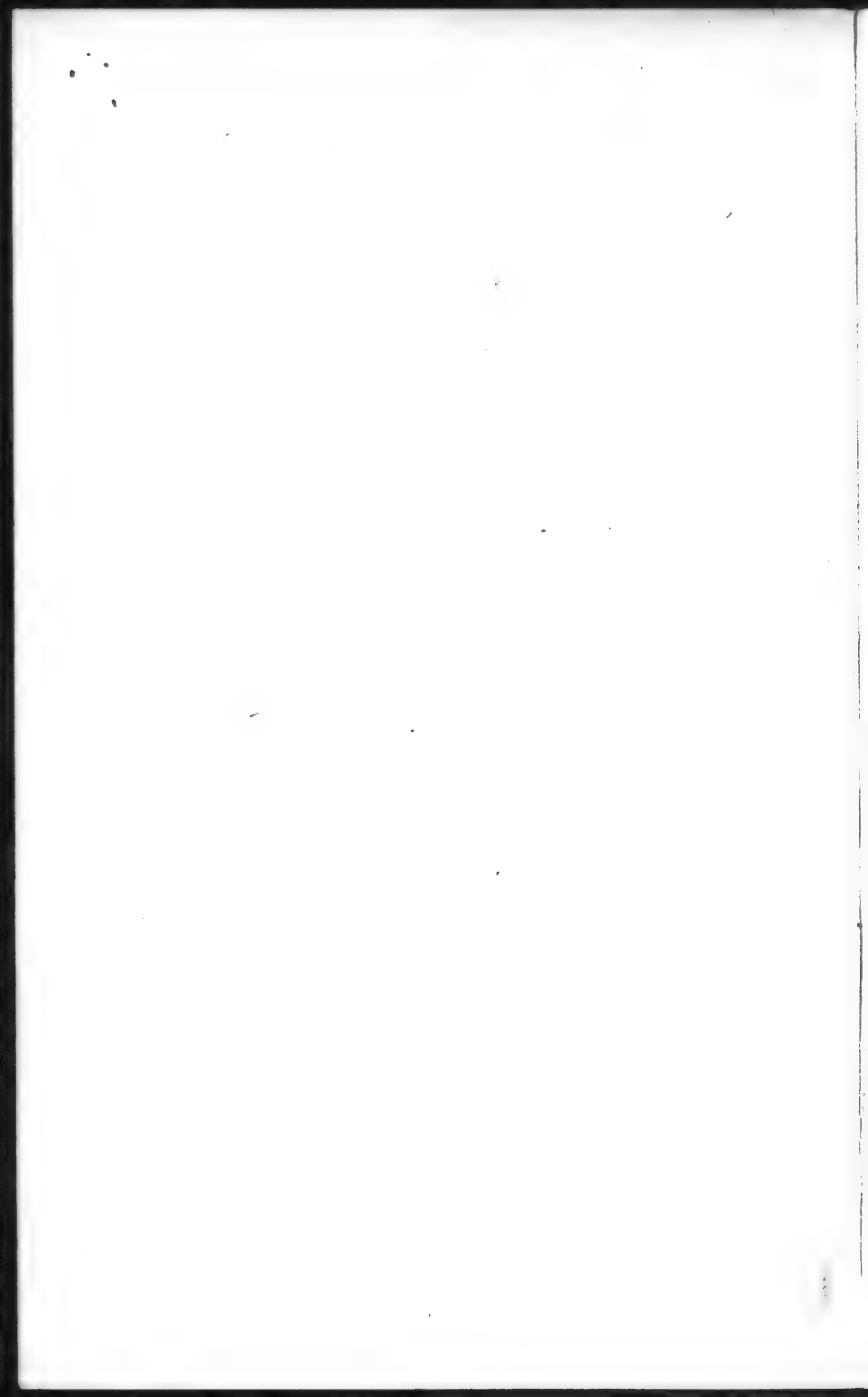
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THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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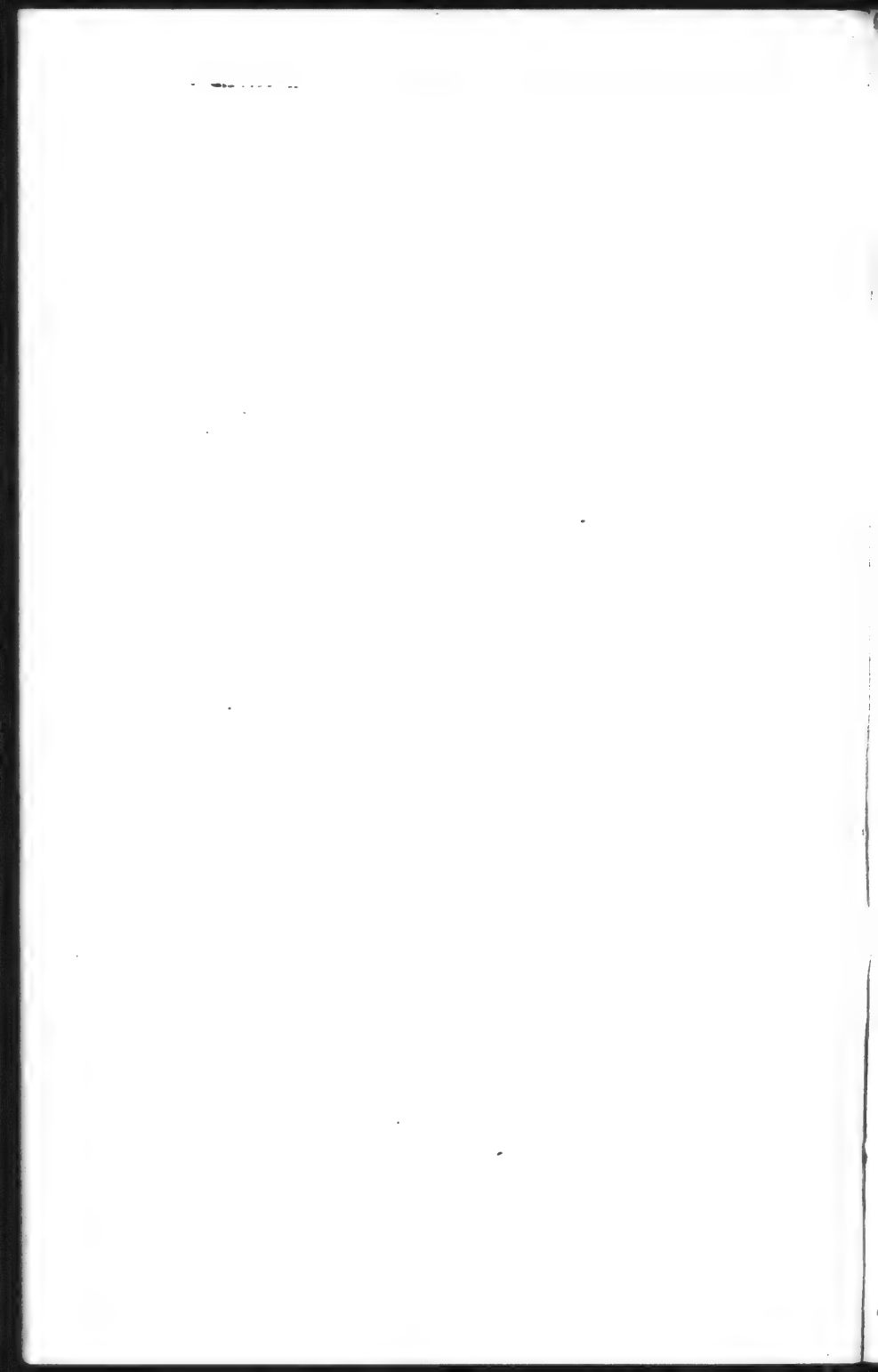
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THE LIFE

OF

MR. JOSEPH COWNLEY.

BY JOHN GAULTER..

THE following narrative of the life of Mr. Cownley is chiefly collected from minutes of several conversations with him ; and although I have had the perusal of his manuscripts, yet as he wrote no circumstantial account of himself, they afford but little information : consequently the narrative will be found, in many instances, defective ; nor is it possible to give a connected series of his labours. However, I hope it will be considered as a tribute, justly due, to the memory of a man remarkable for his piety and abilities. His labours and success in the ministry entitle him to the notice of a people whose interest was his constant care, and among whom his abilities were unremittingly exerted. History is disgraced by heroes who ought to be remembered more for detestation than for praise or imitation. It is only the useful and pious that we can admire with propriety, or imitate with safety. Precious in the sight

of the Lord is the life and death of all His saints; and the memory and piety of the just should be had in everlasting remembrance.

JOHN GAULTER.

ALNWICK, *February 4th*, 1794.

MR. JOSEPH COWNLEY was born June 26th, 1723, at Leominster, in Herefordshire. His parents were not remarkable either for indigence or affluence. They gave their son an education which, though not classical, was every way adapted to his expectations in life; the earlier part of which was not chequered by profaneness, or the dissipation of pleasurable amusements. Even in youth he was cautious in the choice of his companions, and his manners were uncorrupted by the example or influence of others. It is indeed very difficult for young persons to escape untainted by the depraved conversation of neighbours and friends; but that it is possible, Mr. Cownley is an instance. This must not be imputed to any superior excellence in his nature, but to the powerful operations of preventing grace, to which he happily yielded obedience. From his first conscious perceptions, the Divine Spirit attracted his attention, and led his mind to reflect on eternity and the awful concerns thereof. He soon discovered the weakness and depravity of his heart, and the sinfulness of sin; but, although apprized of his malady, he was unacquainted with the method of obtaining a cure. He conversed with all the serious persons he could meet with, particularly a pious speaker among the Quakers, and a Dissenter of the Baptist persuasion.

He received their instructions with gratitude, though it does not appear that he was clearly convinced of the way of salvation by faith in Jesus. His mind laboured under dreadful apprehensions of the Divine displeasure. The evil and corruptions of his own heart gave him the greatest uneasiness. He thought himself the most wretched of sinners, and frequently threw himself upon the ground, crying out to God, with inconceivable anguish of mind, "No misery is equal to this: a wounded spirit who can bear?"

"What greater curse can earth or heaven devise,
Than his who, self-condemn'd, in torture lies?
From agony of mind who knows no rest,
But bears his own accuser in his breast?"

He denied himself of necessary food, and by abstinence and mortification thought to appease the Divine displeasure; for, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, he went about to establish his own. So scrupulous was he about his words, that when asked a question, he would answer, "I think so; I believe so;" lest he should be found, through ignorance, not speaking the truth. In this state of mind he entered into the service of a justice of the peace, a man totally unacquainted with either religion or morality. In many respects, the place was eligible: it opened the prospect of a genteel and comfortable maintenance, and the perquisites of his office were considerable. He served the justice as a travelling secretary. All the servants of the family considered Mr. Cownley to be "too religious;" but, to use his own words, when speaking of himself, "I thought myself the vilest upon earth, because I was not what I considered a good man should be." The gardener of the house said to him one day, "Mr.

Cownley, if you think that every one must be as good as you before they can go to heaven, you will go there by yourself."

The business of the justice sometimes called him to Bath. In that city Mr. Cownley first heard the Methodists. He attended upon the ministry of Mr. Williams, then a very popular preacher; and was pleased with the preacher, though not profited by the sermon. Soon after Mr. Wesley came to that place: under his discourses Mr. Cownley was fully enlightened: he then saw the impotence of his fastings, and the insufficiency of his morality, to purchase the favour of Heaven; and that there is salvation only in Christ. He could find no rest, he desired none, until the Lord, whom he sought, absolved him from his guilt, and gave him the witness and seal of pardon.

"What charm shall bid these horrors rage no more,
Heal the hurt mind, and gentle peace restore?
That charm is Jesus: Jesus can supply
Comfort in life, and courage when we die."

That night, in which the Lord manifested Himself to the distressed mourner, he went to bed, deeply affected with a sense of his burden and misery. His rest was broken and interrupted. In the intervals of sleep, his cry was, "God be merciful to me!" He was heard in that he feared. The words of our Lord to the paralytic were suddenly and powerfully applied to his mind: "Thy sins are forgiven! Thy sins are forgiven!" The darkness vanished away from his soul, and the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings. He was filled with Divine joy, pleasure smiled in his eyes, and heaven reigned in his heart. While he was reflecting upon

what the Lord had done for him, the following lines were applied with powerful energy :—

“ To save what was lost, from heaven He came ;
Come, sinners, and trust in Jesus’s name !
He offers you pardon, He bids you be free ;
If sin be your burden, O come unto Me ! ”

Mr. Cownley was far from being a visionary : it was not from these impressions alone that he drew conclusions of the Divine favour ; he had surer grounds. Peace and hope succeeded anguish and fear ; and the love of God was shed abroad in his heart ; accompanied with the most indubitable evidence that the change he felt, and the work wrought in him, was of God. Nothing less than this could satisfy a mind so well informed, and so anxious to avoid every deception.

Mr. Cownley’s employment exposing him to much company and conversation, which was frequently very disagreeable, he determined to quit his situation ; but his diligence and fidelity having gained the affections of the justice, he was much averse to part with one whom he esteemed a faithful and upright servant. He therefore requested of Mr. Cownley to assign the cause that induced him to go away ; which when he heard, he replied, “ I thought you had religion enough for us both, and should never have supposed that to be the reason.”

Mr. Cownley returned home to Leominster in 1743, where he found a little society that had been formed by Mr. Beaumont, a Welsh preacher, of Mr. Whitefield’s sentiments. He joined this society ; and next year he began to exercise those talents of instruction by which he was so eminently distinguished, and to preach that Gospel, the truth of which the Lord had written on his heart. His

first attempts were received with approbation, and crowned with success. Several were brought to the knowledge of salvation, and established in the truth : they loved and respected him as a father ; and his intention was to live and die in fellowship with them, having no expectation of being ever engaged in a larger sphere of action. At this time many of the Methodist societies were agitated by unprofitable disputes about opinions. The spirit had reached Leominster. Several believed the decrees of Calvin, and others supposed that these sentiments were opposite to Scripture and reason. Among the latter was Mr. Cownley. He wrote to his father in the Gospel, Mr. Wesley, requesting his advice in these critical circumstances. The answer is worthy of being preserved, as it shows the amiable spirit of the writer ; and, though directed to Mr. Cownley, was addressed to the society.

“ BRISTOL, *September 20th*, 1746.

“ MY DEAR BRETHREN,

“ As many of you as have set your hands to the plough, see that you go on, and look not back. The prize and the crown are before you, and in due time you shall reap, if you faint not. Meantime fight the good fight of faith, enduring the cross, and despising the shame. Beware that none of you return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. Show forth out of a loving heart your good conversation, with meekness and wisdom. Avoid all disputes as you would fire : so shall ye continue kindly affectioned one toward another. The God of peace be with you.

“ I am your affectionate brother,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

His endeavours to establish peace in the society, and to extinguish the violent animosity of party, proving unsuccessful, Mr. Wesley requested his attendance at Bristol, and engaged him in the important office of an itinerant preacher. The forms of admission into the Connexion at that time differ from the present. Mr. Cownley kneeled down; and Mr. Wesley, putting the New Testament into his hand, said, "Take thou authority to preach the Gospel." He then gave him his benediction. His first appointment was for Bristol, where his labours were attended with considerable success.

At this period of his life, his voice was very strong, soft, and harmonious; and as he felt the most lively conviction of the truths he taught, his discourses raised in the hearts of the hearers the same heavenly persuasions. He had no design upon their passions: nothing could give him more sensible pain, than to perceive mere mechanical effects from his preaching,—a few tears without conviction, which pass away as the morning cloud, or the early dew. God gave him remarkable power to remonstrate with sinners. The stoutest heart quaked when he pronounced, with his awakening energy, "Why will ye die, O house of Israel? Have I any pleasure in the death of a sinner? But if ye turn not, ye shall die; ye shall surely die, saith the Lord God!" There are many now living who remember his fervour and zeal, before those infirmities commenced which constrained him to confine the overflowings of his soul, and to relax from those exertions in the cause of Jesus, which distinguished the first part of his labours in the vineyard.

Near the close of 1746 he left Bristol, to encounter the violence of the mobs in Staffordshire.

His appointment was in those troublesome regions of Darlaston, Wednesbury, and Walsall. In this neighbourhood he continued three months. Persecution had raised a powerful opposition to the truth. The priests, the magistrates, and the mob were united, and determined to crush the infant society, to prevent what they called "the progress of superstition and enthusiasm." By such names is the doctrine of a sinner's pardon through faith in Jesus Christ distinguished. Truth is mighty, and will prevail; for in proportion to the rage of opposition was the success. Sinners were brought out of darkness into light, and exchanged the tyranny of Satan for the glorious kingdom of liberty and love. Many were awakened and converted; the gates of darkness were opened; the pillars of hell trembled; and numbers experienced that the kingdom of heaven is within us. The persecutions in this part of the kingdom form a remarkable trait in the history of Mr. Wesley, who has related some of the circumstances in his Journal for 1746. It must argue a considerable degree of malevolence in the informed part of the community, to countenance and support persecution; for the rabble would soon have desisted, had they not, directly or indirectly, received support from their superiors; many of whom descended from that propriety of character which they ought to have sustained, and instigated the lower orders not only to insult, but to injure, an innocent and unoffending people, whose only crime was professing faith in Jesus, and worshipping God according to their consciences. Persecution is an evil which ought to be without a name in a country professedly Christian. It is a violation of the law of God, and every just law of man. It was begun and

carried on by the pride and passion of the more powerful, from the time of the merciless Cain, to the solemn burning of heretics. No pretence, however plausible, should induce men to injure each other, for any real or supposed differences in religion: it dissolves that natural and social union of our nature, and makes us worse than savage beasts.

Mr. Cownley's next remove was into Cornwall. The fruits of his labour in that county are now only known to a few, to whom his memory is still dear. He travelled in Cornwall about three months; and then removed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he arrived in March, 1747. The people received him with every mark of affection. Multitudes attended, and many were converted from the error of their ways. There are still living witnesses that the word he preached was the "power of God unto salvation;" and when the effects of novelty subsided, he was loved for his piety, and esteemed for his abilities.

Mr. Cownley continued at Newcastle until the beginning of July, 1748. In the preceding year, Mr. Williams, an intimate friend of Mr. Cownley, went over to Ireland. His preaching was attended with success. Multitudes flocked to hear; and, though in the midst of the greatest opposition, he formed a society. Several of them knew that God does now also give "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins" to those who repent and believe the Gospel. The next year Mr. Trembath informed Mr. Wesley, that they were persecuted on every hand, but that the society "stood like marble pillars; and, by the grace of God, were resolved rather to die with Christ than to deny Him." The situation of affairs in that kingdom requiring an

increase of the most able preachers in the Connexion, Mr. Cownley was appointed for Dublin. He arrived there in July, 1748, where he laboured for about three months. Here a very painful disagreement took place between him and Mr. Samuel Larwood, which induced Mr. Wesley to interpose, in order to reconcile the contending parties. It arose from an impropriety in Mr. Larwood, who, without reason, and in opposition to his brethren, admitted and expelled members of the society. This affair may appear uninteresting; but, as it gave rise to a remarkable feature in Mr. Cownley's character, it was necessary to mention it. Incidents, apparently small in themselves, generally form what may be considered peculiar in our manners, which equally expose us to censure or praise. This was the case with Mr. Cownley: his mind was painfully disturbed, and so deep were the impressions, that time could never remove them. He resolved from that moment never to say an unkind word to those with whom he might differ; and I believe he kept his resolution to the day of his death. If he was called upon to attend meetings where there was the least expectation of any differences or debate, he always excused himself, if possible; and if unavoidably present when any were incidentally introduced, he generally rose up and walked out. One day I desired him to inform me what were his reasons for being so singular. He related the preceding affair, and added, "I cannot bear it, because it gives me so much pain to see any offended." I once saw him in the most exquisite distress, from a supposition that he had given unnecessary offence to those who differed in opinion from him.

The work of God, by the successive labours of the

preachers, spread through different parts of Ireland. In Cork a society was formed in the face of violence and opposition exceeding all description. In the latter end of November, 1748, Mr. Cownley went to that city, where he preached at the peril of his life. But such was the spirit which influenced the preachers, that they counted not their lives dear, so that they might win souls. The mob, headed by a brutal barbarian of the name of Butler, did not stop at insult. Forgetting every dictate of reason, or feeling of humanity, they attacked the congregations with stones, clubs, and swords; so that the lives both of the preachers and people were in imminent danger. Outraging all law and security, they broke the windows, and burst into the houses, of every one suspected of heresy; where they committed crimes which are as painful to conceive as to describe. The magistrates were applied to, but without success; instead of affording assistance, they added fuel to the flame: the preachers were presented by the grand jury as vagrants. It is something singular that in that memorable presentment, preserved in Mr. Wesley's seventh Journal, Mr. Cownley, by a misnomer, is called Joseph M'Auliff. At the assizes, these disorders were discountenanced by His Majesty's judge, and in a little time the mob was finally suppressed. This persecution, so far from preventing, rather increased, the zeal of the preachers: the Lord smiled on their labours, and numbers were added to the church of Christ.

After continuing some time in Ireland, Mr. Cownley returned to Newcastle in the spring of 1750. A letter which he received from Mr. Wesley will give some idea of his situation about this time:—

“DUBLIN, *April 12th*, 1750.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I DOUBT you are in a great deal more danger from honour than from dishonour. So it is with me. I always find there is most hazard in sailing upon smooth water. When the winds blow and the seas rage, even the sleepers will rise and call upon God.

“From Newcastle to London, and from London to Bristol, God is everywhere reviving His work. I find it is so now in Dublin: although there has been great imprudence in some, whereby grievous wolves have lately crept in amongst us, not sparing the flock; by whom some souls have been utterly destroyed, and others wounded, who are not yet recovered. Those who ought to have stood in the gap did not. But I trust they will be wiser for the time to come. After a season, I think it will be highly expedient for you to labour in Ireland again. Mr. Lunell has been on the brink of the grave by a fever. Yesterday we had hopes of his recovery. I see a danger you are in, which, perhaps, you do not see yourself. Is it not most pleasing to me, as well as you, to be always preaching of the love of God? And is there not a time when we are peculiarly led thereto, and find a peculiar blessing therein? Without doubt, so it is. But yet it would be utterly wrong and unscriptural to preach of nothing else. Let the law always prepare for the Gospel. I scarce ever spoke more earnestly here of the love of God in Christ, than last night. But it was after I had been tearing the unawakened in pieces. Go thou, and do likewise. It is true the love of God in Christ alone feeds His children. But even they are to be guided, as well as fed. Yes, and often physicked too. And the bulk of our hearers must be

purged before they are fed. Else we only feed the disease. Beware of all honey. It is the best extreme ; but it is an extreme.

“ I am your affectionate brother,
“ JOHN WESLEY.”

To preach Christ, to display Him as the Saviour of sinners, was Mr. Cownley's favourite topic ; yet he did not forget by the terrors of the Lord to persuade men. Mr. Wesley, in this letter, only expresses his fears, lest by indulging too much on an agreeable subject, he should not be sufficiently explicit on another, no less necessary, in preaching the Gospel. The extremes are judiciously marked by Mr. Wesley, and may serve as a memento to all who preach the Gospel of the grace of God.

In the autumn of 1750 Mr. Cownley left Newcastle, and proceeded to Bristol ; from whence he sailed to Ireland. He visited several places in that kingdom, and established societies. In Limerick, when preaching in the street, he was beset by a mob. The principal promoters were soldiers, one of whom assaulted Mr. Cownley. The soldier being noticed by a friend, Mr. Cownley complained to the commanding officer. With a justice which so frequently distinguishes the conduct of the British officers, he desired Mr. Cownley to name the punishment, and it should be inflicted. He answered, he only desired peace ; which was soon restored by the timely exertions of the commander. A different spirit influenced one of the ministers. He was determined that none of his parishioners should be Methodists. Many, indeed, were out of his reach ; but the poor were threatened that their weekly allowance should be stopped, unless they desisted

from hearing these men. This holy inquisitor sent for a poor old woman who attended the preaching, and with an air of vast authority demanded, "And what do you believe? What is your faith?" With great simplicity she began to repeat the Belief. He stopped her, with an oath, and said, "That is my faith:" then, with a torrent of imprecations, and expressions which are too wicked to be repeated, he dismissed her. It will not demand any remarkable degree of discernment to determine which had the most of the spirit of Christianity, the military or the priestly officer.

Mr. Cownley continued in Ireland a short time, and then returned to Newcastle. I have not sufficient documents to fix his different stations, nor the success of his labours, from 1751 to the beginning of 1755. Through powerful exertions in preaching, he had fallen into a languid habit of body, which was succeeded by a malignant fever. Calmly resigned to the disposal of Providence, he waited with Christian fortitude the event, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." In a little time he was restored to his friends, and to the church of God. In the month of October, 1755, he was married at Cork, to the pious and amiable Miss Massiot, of that city.

From his first connexion with the Methodists he cultivated the friendship of Mr. Whitefield. Mr. Cownley loved him for his work's sake, and revered his memory to the last. They corresponded with a freedom peculiar to the disciples of Jesus, and which is the natural offspring of love and union. The following letter illustrates the temper of this heavenly man, and his great esteem for Mr. Cownley. As it is an original, and the writer was conspicuously

eminent in the present revival of vital religion, it will no doubt be acceptable to many.

“NEWCASTLE, *September 16th*, 1755.

“MY DEAR MR. COWNLEY,

“DARE I wish you joy (after having been in sight of your heavenly port) of putting out to sea again? I hear you are upon the recovery, and therefore humbly hope, as your sickness has not been unto death, that it has been only a kind purgation to cause you to bring forth more fruit. Then, then shall you sing,

‘O happy rod,
That brought me nearer to my God!’

Perhaps ere this reaches your hands, you may be entered into the marriage-state. May the everlasting and ever-loving Bridegroom of the church bless both you and yours, and give you to live as becometh the heirs of the grace of life! I hope you will never say, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore can no longer come forth into the highways and hedges.’ I dare not entertain such a thought of my dear Mr. Cownley. No: whatever others may have done, I trust he will never say, ‘I pray you now have me excused.’ God forbid. A good wife and a good fortune call for double diligence in the work of God. You see I love you, by writing thus. A few days ago I was in hopes of seeing you; but now I fear it is too late. O this pilgrim’s life! With a pilgrim’s heart, how sweet! You must pray for me. I want to begin to do something for Jesus. I am a dwarf,—a dwarf; and yet, O amazing love! Jesus still vouchsafes to bless and own my feeble labours. Everywhere the fields are white, ready unto harvest. O for more disinterested labourers! Then shall we

go on, and be terrible, like unto an army with banners. This be your happy lot in Ireland ! Pray remember me to all as they come in your way ; and accept of this as a token of unfeigned love from, my dear Mr. Cownley,

“ Yours, &c., in our common Lord,

“ GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

The danger of an increasing property is here judiciously adverted to by Mr. Whitefield. Few there are who, in the midst of affluence, support that spirit of religion, which distinguished their characters in humble situations of life. The history of Methodism abounds with awful examples of the reverse. Tempers and dispositions which honoured the cause of the Redeemer have been changed, in consequence of an increase of fortune and importance. This friendly caution was not lost on Mr. Cownley. He treasured it up in his heart ; and no alteration in his temper or manners could be discovered. His soul had higher cares. He had fixed his heart on God, and laid up all his riches in heaven ! He had a charge,—the charge of souls. He could not desert the flock, nor “for a grasp of ore, or paltry office, sell them to the foe !” He did not ; he lived for their service, and died watered with their tears.

The zeal which influenced the minds of the preachers, and their continued exertions in promoting the everlasting interest of men, was much encouraged by a reciprocal intercourse by letter. It was then, and continues to be, admirably adapted to increase and maintain a holy spirit of emulation among the brethren. May these instances remind us of that spirit which we ought to impart, in all

our communications with each other! The following letters I consider of this nature, which, without any other apology, I shall insert:—

“BRISTOL, *December 10th*, 1755.

“MY DEAR MR. COWNLEY,

“NOT want of love, but of leisure and opportunity, has prevented my answering your kind letter. Immediately on the receipt of it I was called to the west of England; and since that, from a cold contracted in the north, I have been threatened with an inflammatory quinsy. But, alas! like you, when putting into harbour, I am likely to put out to sea again. O that it may be to take some prizes for my God! Blessed be His name, though I am reduced to the ungrateful necessity of preaching only once a day, yet I find the word of the Lord doth not return empty. Congregations are very numerous, and fresh stirring there seems to be among the dry bones. Letters from Virginia inform me that above a hundred have lately been awakened in one county; so that I trust the walls of the new Jerusalem will be built in troublesome times. May the glorious Redeemer make use of you, more and more, in this Divine employ; and may you daily be built up in your most holy faith! From my very inmost heart I wish you all the blessings of the upper and nether springs; and, if the Lord spares life, hope to see you in Ireland. Continue to pray for me as one that loves you tenderly; and, though less than the least of all, yet, your affectionate friend and ready servant for Christ’s sake,

“GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

“SUNDERLAND, *August 14th, 1756.*

“MY DEAR MR. COWNLEY,

“I AM glad to hear that you are restored to your throne again, and that Jesus is still honouring you in preaching the everlasting Gospel. As I am now on my tour to Scotland, I have thoughts of coming to the north of Ireland, and pay you a visit in Dublin. How it will turn out, the Lord of the harvest alone knows. I hope the work is upon the advance with you. In London there hath been a most glorious awakening all the winter. Almost all last week we had most blessed seasons thrice a day in and about Leeds. At York, Yarm, and here, Jesus hath done wonders; and surely it is the wonder of wonders that such a worthless wretch as I am should be employed by Him. Help, O help me to praise redeeming love! O for a hundred thousand lives to spend in the service of Christ! Adieu, my dear man, adieu! My love to all. I earnestly entreat their and your prayers, that if I come, it may be in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; for whose great name’ sake, I subscribe myself,

“Yours, &c.,

“GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

The fever which Mr. Cownley had in 1755 so relaxed his nerves that his labours were considerably interrupted. A pain settled in his head, which no medicine could ever remove. After consulting the most able physicians in Ireland, he stated his case to Mr. Wesley, and received the following answer:—

“LONDON, *January 10th, 1756.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I HAVE no objection to anything but the blister.

If it does good, well; but if I had been at Cork, all the physicians in Ireland should not have put it upon your head. Remember poor Bishop Pearson. An apothecary, to cure a pain in his head, covered it with a large blister: in an hour he cried out, 'O my head, my head!' and was a fool ever after to the day of his death. I believe cooling things, if anything under heaven, would remove that violent irritation of your nerves which probably occasions the pain. Moderate riding may be of use; I believe of more than the blister. Only do not take more labour upon you than you can bear. Do as much as you can, and no more. Let us make use of the present time. Every day is of importance. We know not how few days of peace remain. We join in love to you and yours. I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY"

Though no radical cure was effected, yet the severity of the disorder abated by some attention to his manner of living and preaching. He removed to Dublin in the beginning of the year 1756, where Mrs. Cownley was delivered of her first child; and in the month of October he arrived at the Orphan-House in Newcastle. The work in the north of England extended much by the united labours of Mr. Cownley and Mr. Hopper, and their brethren. Several societies were founded, which continue to this day. On the banks of the Tyne, in Prudhoe, and Nafferton, beside a variety of other places in that neighbourhood, numbers were truly awakened and converted to God. In one of Mr. Cownley's excursions into the Dales, he was insulted by a mob headed by a clergyman. Warm from the village-

tavern, this zealous son of the Church, with the collected rabble, advanced to the field of action. Mr. Cownley was preaching near the door of an honest Quaker, when the minister insisted that he was breaking the order of the Church, and began to recite the canon against conventicles. Mr. Cownley replied, "If I am disorderly, you are not immaculate;" and reminded him of the canon "for sober conversation, and against frequenting ale-houses." Confounded with the application, the parson retired for a while; but, mustering up his courage, he again returned, and, with threats of prosecution, began to take down the names of the hearers. A Quaker, who was one of the congregation, hearing the alarming denunciations, stepped up, and, with unruffled gravity, clapped the parson on the back, and said, "Friend John, put my name down first." This ended the contest: quite disconcerted, the clergyman withdrew, and left Mr. Cownley to finish his discourse in peace. It is difficult to introduce anecdotes of this kind without being suspected of a design to reflect on a particular community; but this suspicion is highly unreasonable. The sacred writers had certainly no intention to injure Christianity when they recorded the avarice of Demas, or the errors of Nicolas. The want of character in individuals has been the lot of every Christian society. Methodism has produced such, which have been faithfully noticed by Mr. Wesley, in justice to the public, exposing them as examples of impiety, to deter others, and enforce a contrary practice.

The active life of Mr. Cownley has already been considered. We are now to view him in his more confined and local situation. On account of his health, his station has been principally in the north of Eng-

land; his disorder rendering him incapable of fulfilling the duties of an itinerant life. The inveterate headache so oppressed his spirits, that, to use his own expression, "the keenest attacks of the gout were nothing in comparison." His chief residence was in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. At first he had apartments in the Orphan-House, but afterwards he furnished a house for himself. Though enfeebled by infirmities, he exerted his remaining strength in calling sinners to repentance. He visited those parts of the north which now include the Newcastle, Sunderland, Hexham, and Alnwick Circuits. Wherever he came he was received as a servant of God. The Lord owned and blessed his labours among the people; and the living seals still praise him in the gates. He was like a centre of union to the preachers; and they treated him with the reverence of a father, more than with the familiarity of a brother.

After his return to England, and fixing his residence in Newcastle, he continued to consult medical men. Dr. Turner, a gentleman high in professional eminence, gave him the most flattering hopes of a radical cure; but theory is disputable, and promises of this kind are rarely confirmed by success. Mr. Wesley recommended the doctor to Mr. Cownley as a person on whose medical skill he might depend. He stated his case, received the prescriptions, but his expectations were disappointed. Satisfied that his disorder baffled the address of human art, without a murmur he resigned his body and soul into the hands of his almighty Benefactor; and sought, in the consolations of religion, and in the resignation of patience, a relief which the hopes of his friends and the assurances of physicians had promised in vain.

Though Mr. Cownley was admired, he never affected popularity. His disposition, had he lived in the austere ages of monkish superstition, would have led him to the cloister. All noise he dreaded, as much as it is courted by others. His chief delight was in the pulpit, his book, and his God; his visits to others were rather the effect of duty than inclination; and his conversation was chiefly confined to the great truths of religion, the work of God, and the experience of Christians. Few men, with his connexions, have been more abstracted from the world: perhaps he indulged the desire to excess,—

“Along the cool, sequester’d vale of life,
To keep the noiseless tenor of his way.”

In this year (1757) I have many reasons to believe that his soul was truly alive to God, and that the life he lived was by the faith of the Son of God. Several of his letters which were written about this time are preserved. They reflect a just resemblance of his mind,—a mind ardently desirous of the happiness of others. One to his amiable and intimate friend Miss Allen (now Mrs. Carr) is an example of genuine simplicity:—

“October 9th, 1757.

“DEAR BETTY,

“NEVER forget that one thing is needful. Wherever you are, whatever you do, have that one thing always in your eye. Remember the world is a cheat; and that he who has most of it will be constrained one day to say, ‘All is vanity and vexation of spirit.’ Keep up communion with your God. Contrive every day to meet Him in some private place or other. He expects it. It is a sign of no great intimacy when

we have nothing to communicate to a friend but what we can always do in company. Search His word, and meditate on it; be familiar with His friends, esteem them as the excellent ones of the earth, and converse as much with them as may be; keep your lamp trimmed and burning, and have oil in your vessel; endeavour as often as possible to be in the way when the mails arrive from Mount Zion. You know that they always bring good news for pilgrims and strangers. I am just going with a mail to the Fell. The Lord grant I may have good tidings for many. Think of us when your Lord bids you ask what you will. Mrs. Cownley joins me in love. I am your affectionate friend and brother,

“JOSEPH COWNLEY.”

Mr. Cownley's life appears to contain nothing remarkably interesting from 1757 to 1760; but as he was charged with disaffection to the established clergy, it may not be improper to examine the justice of the charge. No man was more attached to serious persons of every persuasion than Mr. Cownley. If he had predilections, they were favourable to the pious of the Establishment; but as his heart and life were influenced by the Gospel, so were his opinions. He did not admire in the gross, nor censure without discrimination. He had learned to distinguish; and in his views the precious and the vile were equally objects of praise or detestation. In the course of his travels he had frequently opportunities of forming just estimates of men and manners; and it was impossible, to a man of his observation, that the characters and doctrines of many of the clergy should pass unnoticed. Uninfluenced by subordinate or any motives but those of truth, he sometimes offended

by exposing the wickedness of clerical impiety, and the consequences of their defection from the doctrines of their fathers ; but if this was a crime, Mr. Wesley, Dr. Burnet, Bishop of Sarum, and the present Bishop of Rochester, Dr. Horsley, are equally criminal : with such company, bigotry itself will forgive. From the natural mildness of his character, he never indulged improper severity.

One of the sages of antiquity has said, " Account that day happy which brings no new misfortune." Indeed, the history of human life is one continued scene of perplexity and distress ; and happy are they whose minds are so influenced by the spirit of Jesus as to say, with St. Paul, " I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Men, however eminent for learning, fortune, or piety, have been subject to partial or overwhelming calamities, which neither their wisdom could foresee, nor their prudence prevent. It is some relief to know that we do not suffer alone, though the causes and nature of our sufferings may be very different. Profane and sacred history afford examples of what the experience of every day confirms, that man is born to sorrow, and that it is part of our duty, as men and Christians, like the good Samaritan, to pour in the oil and the wine. From trials, Mr. Cownley was not exempt ; he had to grapple with those which unassisted nature is too feeble to endure. Previous to his union with Miss Massiot, a deed of settlement in trust was executed. This vested the management of the principal part of her property in two trustees. Several years after the execution of the deed, one of the trustees died ; and the other, a gentleman of the name of Matthias, removed to Jamaica. It is not my intention to trace the various mazes of his difficulties : it is

sufficient to observe that through the trust, and a variety of other causes, his affairs were involved in the utmost confusion ; so that, though Mrs. Cownley brought a fortune of near three thousand pounds, his family were on the verge of beggary. Suspense is always disagreeable ; but when it involves our support, and that of our family, it is more,—it then becomes one of the most painful situations in which we can be placed. For many years this was his case, between hope and despair ; but it had a happy effect : his soul was led to centre in God, where he waited in hope. In his distress, he found in the pious Mr. Charles Greenwood a friend indeed ; the recollection of whose disinterested kindness only expired with his breath. In 1766 it was thought necessary that he should come up to London ; where, if I mistake not, he resided with Mr. Greenwood. Though his business was secular, he had work to do for his great Master. His labours were received, not merely with acceptance, but with admiration ; and several remember that visit with gratitude. It was not until the following year that his affairs were finally adjusted by a new assignment upon the original trusts. On Mr. Greenwood's receiving the writings from Jamaica, with the signature of Mr. Matthias, he expresses the warmth of his affection : “ You cannot conceive what pleasure this news gave us. I thought of those words of the old clerk in the country after a wedding, ‘This is a joyful day indeed.’ We heartily wish you and dear Mrs. Cownley health to enjoy it, and that you may live to bring up your little ones in the fear of the Lord.” Thus ended a business, the remembrance of which gave him pain and pleasure ; and of which he said to me, “ I did not know that I was worth a farthing in the world.”

There are few religious societies, not those immediately under the notice of the apostles, but what have been exposed to the illusion of enthusiasm. We read the scriptural accounts with regret; but it is some mitigation to remember that these effects generally arise from the weakness, though sometimes from the wickedness, of men. There is not an established or independent church in Europe, but what has been disgraced; but if religion, or any particular society, must be reproached, because of the frantic reveries of some of their professors, then every branch of science, as well as religious community, will have full measure, pressed down, and running over. In 1760 and 1761 an extraordinary work commenced in London: the kingdom of the Redeemer was enlarged, many were convinced and converted, numbers were added to the society, and renewed in love. By the folly of a few men, the blessing was perverted. The principal visionary, and who exceeded the rest in delusion, was George Bell, whose piety and zeal degenerated into madness and fury: from a dreamer he became a prophet, declared himself immortal, and finally predicted the end of the world. It is impossible to describe the confusion into which the excesses of these men threw the society. An extract of a letter from Mr. John Downes, a friend of Mr. Cownley, may throw some light on an affair which should remain as a monument of possible extravagance.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“As to the follies and extravagancies of the Witnesses, I consider them as the devices of Satan, to cast a blemish upon a real work of God. The letter from brother Lawrence, in Mr. Hampson’s

'Book of Letters,' is a short description of it. The more I converse with the solid ones, the more I long to experience what they do. It is a state worthy of a Christian. As to the follies of the enthusiasts, Mr. Charles hears every week less or more. Why his brother suffers them, we cannot tell. He threatens, but cannot find in his heart to put in execution. The consequence is, the talk of all the town, and entertainment for the newspapers. What will be the end, who can tell? My friend is strongly invited up to town to help in this time of need: I mean, to quell these pretenders to prophecy, &c. O my friend, I only want to love the Lord Jesus. I am sick of all besides. Will you not help me on by your prayers?

"Yours, &c.,

"JOHN DOWNES."

There was something in Mr. Cownley's disposition averse from the slightest approach of fancy and imagination in religion. From his experience he had been taught that nothing prevents a real, more than the appearance of a fictitious work; that dreamers and prophets are generally persons of suspicious characters, or whose understandings are only remarkable for their weakness. It cannot, therefore, be a matter of astonishment that we find him using all his influence to prevent and resist a torrent of imaginary piety, which exposed Methodism to reproach, and sensibly injured the interest of vital religion. Mr. Cownley was earnestly solicited by many of the friends to come up to London to assist in crushing an evil which menaced the society with destruction. The reasons why he did not do not appear, though it is most probable the principal cause was the situation of his temporal affairs. The

spirit which prevailed in the centre affected Methodism in its remotest branches. But there the disorder, in its commencement, met a powerful resistance. Mr. Cownley, Mr. Hopper, and several others opposed with success, and had the happiness of seeing it expire. Mr. Charles Wesley, from the beginning, had been in opposition to George Bell and his associates. This appears from several letters which he wrote to Mr. Cownley, one of which I shall insert.

“BRISTOL, *February 1st, 1763.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I RECEIVED a letter from you just before God laid His hand upon me and took away my strength. Full often have I intended to answer it; for my love to you is the same as ever; and my hope of you is steadfast, that you will be of those who endure to the end. Sad havoc Satan has made of the flock since you and I were first acquainted. What they will do after my brother's departure I leave to the Lord, for I dare not think of it. I gave warning, four years ago, of the flood of enthusiasm which has now overflowed us; and of the sect of Ranters that should arise out of the Witnesses. My last hymns are a farther standing testimony. Tell Christopher Hopper I reverence him for his stand against the torrent. The Lord is your strength and wisdom. You had need keep close to Him and His word. Remember me and mine.

“Yours most affectionately,

“CHARLES WESLEY.”

Mr. John Wesley has been much censured for want of firmness in resisting these enormities in

their rise; but what the severity of criticism may object, a candid examination will reject. Though prompt on the call of manifest danger, and instantly executive; yet, as there was, in his views, a probability of the remedy being worse than the disease, a man of his feelings and piety would naturally suspend. His situation was peculiarly delicate; he embraced all the consequences, and concluded that the violence of the flame might be soon expended; that patience and forbearance would more effectually extinguish what a sudden and violent resistance might increase. If his hopes were not realized, it is no proof that his intentions were not just; and he had the satisfaction at least of attempting to save the society from a division which at last became necessary. It would be improper to enter more minutely on a subject the particulars of which are to be found in the Journals and Life of Mr. Wesley.

From Mr. Cownley's first conviction and conversion his union with the Methodists was unshaken. Though the affliction under which he laboured exposed him to the temptation of settling in a society where his labours might have been acceptable; yet no consciousness of abilities, or prospect of emolument, could alienate his affections or labours from that community in which he was brought to the knowledge of salvation. That he had opportunities, both before and after his incapacity to travel, of enjoying a lucrative situation, I have many reasons to believe: but his heart was fixed; and such was the force of his love of those tender connexions which are formed in the unity of undisguised religion, that nothing but violence or expulsion could have separated him from his brethren. As I could not pass unnoticed a conduct so meritorious in Mr.

Cownley, I hope it will not appear an improper introduction to an animating letter from his friend Mr. Whitefield:—

“LONDON, *September 1st*, 1766.

“MY DEAR MR. COWNLEY,

“INDEED, and indeed, I received no letter from you whilst abroad. Sickness prevents my corresponding more frequently now I am come home. Home, did I say? Where is my home? Where yours lies,—in heaven. There is our citizenship! There may our conversation always be! Blessed be God that our salvation is nearer than when we first believed! Yet a little while, and He that cometh will come, and will not tarry.

‘We soon shall hear the’ archangel’s voice;
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice!’

Methinks I hear you and yours, dear Mr. Hopper’s whole self, and all the Orphan-House true pilgrims, adding, ‘Amen! Hallelujah!’ O for one more meeting on earth, before we take our flight to heaven! Abba, Father, all things are possible with Thee! Is it practicable for you to come to town, to assist at the Tabernacle for a month or six weeks, if you have proper notice? My helpers, as well as myself, are invalids. Dear Mr. Wesley, I am persuaded, will readily consent. We are upon very good terms.

‘O may we find the ancient way,
Our wondering foes to move,
And force the Heathen world to say,
See how these Christians love!’

God bless you all! Does Mr. Hopper think to go to

heaven before me? Well, my turn must come by
and by. Help, dear friends, help to pray thither,
“Yours, &c., in a never-failing Jesus,
“GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

No materials of which I am possessed enable me to continue this biographical sketch of Mr. Cownley from 1766 to the death of Mrs. Cownley. Years had not impaired, but increased, their reciprocal affection. Parents of a numerous family, they enjoyed in domestic society all that happiness of which humanity is capable. But, alas! all human comforts hang by a dubious thread. We possess with uncertainty, and inherit but for a moment. To lament the departure of a friend is not only a principle of nature, but religion; and that man must be lost to all those divine affections which the friends of Jesus experience who can with a barbarous apathy commit to the grave the partner of his joys and sorrow. This was not his case on the death of Mrs. Cownley. As his affections were not the result of passion, the affliction of his loss remained when its violence had subsided; and, to his last moments, every recall of the past revived the anguish of his grief. It cannot be said, that “to feel is criminal:” we are only guilty when, by impatient insult, we arraign and impeach the providence of God. The infinite Redeemer draws nearer to us when we see Him weeping over the tomb of Lazarus; and He cannot but approve of those sensibilities which we find in Himself. To suffer is ours, independent of choice; and it is our folly and weakness to expect impossibilities. The enjoyments of life, like many of the operations of nature, deceive our expectations, and disappoint our hopes; and at last we are unwilling to be convinced,

“By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.”

O happy Christian, your hopes can never die: death may divide, but cannot separate. You shall meet

“Where angels gather immortality from life’s fair tree.”

In the month of March, 1774, Mrs. Cownley being pregnant, it was expected that she would soon take her bed. Her mind had been impressed with a persuasion that she should never survive. Under this presentiment, with the greatest calmness, she formally parted with her friends. To one she said, after embracing her, “I shall never see you here again.” So perfectly satisfied was she of the truth, that all the demands on the family were paid, her affairs settled, and she literally prepared to die. Mr. Cownley had engaged for a few days to visit the friends in Alnwick, and, without the least apprehension of danger, proceeded on his journey. Her eyes followed him until he passed out of sight: she then shed tears, and said, “I shall never see thee any more.” As her danger approached, her confidence increased. She had long taken Him for her portion who has said, “I will never forsake thee,” and in the last struggle of nature was not disappointed. Her labour came on, she was brought to bed, and soon after expired. But hers was not a setting, but a rising sun. The victory was complete. The fears of death had fled like the shades of the evening. She triumphed in the name of Jesus: that precious name hung upon her lips. When burst the bonds of life, immortal happiness dawned upon her soul, and

“Her last faltering accents whisper’d praise.”

Unconscious of the collecting storm, Mr. Cownley was quietly pursuing his labours when he received the message of her danger. He set out from Alnwick, but before his arrival in Newcastle Mrs. Cownley was no more. It is easier to conceive than describe his feelings from an event so little expected; though it was some mitigation to his affliction that her confidence was not shaded by a doubt. His soul seemed to follow her into eternity; and that state of invisible intelligence became as familiar in contemplation as sensible existence. It is not difficult to conceive him saying,—

“When midnight spreads her sable curtains round,
 I lift my eyes to heaven’s empyreal seat,
 Pursue thy image through the vast profound,
 Beyond the stars that roll beneath thy feet.
 Thy virtues there with beams celestial shine,
 Assume superior charms, and lustre all divine.”

To soften the severity of the loss, Mr. Cownley did not want the consolations of friendship. A letter on this subject, in which most are interested, will at least be excused, if not acceptable.

“LONDON, *June 9th*, 1774.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“It is the Lord! Let Him do as seemeth Him good. He has taken away the desire of your eyes with a stroke; but He does not forbid you to feel your loss, like Ezekiel. It is a great thing that you can submit, and patiently bear your incomparable loss. By and by you will feel the comfort of calm and perfect resignation. Perhaps you may not be joyful in tribulation till, through much tribulation, you enter the kingdom. You shall go to her, and then you will know perfectly the love of your Father in this severe affliction, and comprehend how all the

paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. If you were with her now, your children would be safe under the care of their heavenly Father. You cannot hope to see them all brought up; but the Lord will look to that. Trust this with Him, and be anxious for nothing. I shall very shortly leave my widow and children to our common Friend. It is well His promise is on our side; for there is no help in man, no dependence on him, either before our death or after it. My partner's heart towards you and your children, you know is that of, my dear brother,

“Your ever affectionate

“CHARLES WESLEY.”

Mr. Cownley's principal engagements after the death of his wife were preaching, study, and visiting the sick. In his favourite retirement, he spent the greatest part of his time in collecting that agreeable variety which rendered his preaching so instructive, useful, and entertaining. He was seldom without his book. Blessed with a tenacious memory, he treasured up in his mind a fund of various knowledge; and in its application he consulted not the applause, but the essential benefit, of others. His conversation was without ornament; and it would have been difficult, unassisted by an intimate acquaintance, to discover any remarkable degree of information. He spoke but little in company, unless his opinion was called for; and then his observations were generally just, and frequently pertinent. His serious deportment, his conversation, his fervour in preaching and prayer, discovered him to be a pilgrim upon earth, seeking a city whose founder and builder is the Lord.

In 1780 he suffered another loss in his family, by the death of his favourite son, Massiot Cownley. Convinced of the defects of his own, he spared no pains nor expense in the education of his son. At a proper age, the young man was committed to the care of a surgeon in London, where his abilities promised a distinguished eminence in the profession. After the expiration of his apprenticeship, his disposition led him to the army, much against the inclination of his father, who suffered what he found it difficult to prevent. The piety and instructions of parents cannot always influence the conduct of children; and they have often to lament, before God, a temper and inclination destructive of present and everlasting happiness, which without effect they have opposed. In 1779 Massiot was appointed surgeon of the Queen's Rangers, a regiment then raising by Colonel Stanton; and as he was put upon the staff of the regiment, he was secured in a provision for life. But, alas! he had scarcely begun to act upon this theatre of dissipation, when his career was ended. His manners, though agreeable, were influenced by the maxims of this world; for by mixing with men of fashion and pleasure, he unfortunately imbibed their principles. It is said he fell in what is falsely called an affair of honour; * but it was happy for his father, that this

* The famous Sir Walter Raleigh, a man of known courage and honour, being very injuriously treated by a hot-headed, rash youth, who next proceeded to challenge him, and, on his refusal, spit upon him, and that in public; the knight, taking out his handkerchief, with great calmness made him this reply: "Young man, if I could as easily wipe your blood from my conscience, as I can this injury from my face, I would this moment take away your life." The consequence was, that the youth, struck with the sudden and strong sense of his misbehaviour, fell upon his knees, and begged forgiveness.

circumstance, by the prudence of his children, was kept from his knowledge. Such an event as the death of Massiot was no small addition to his grief; and although he suffered like a Christian, he mourned over the loss of his son with all the tenderness of a parent.

At the Conference in 1788 Mr. Cownley was stationed in Edinburgh. In September he proceeded to that city, and began his labours, not, indeed, with the fire of youth, but the wisdom of age and experience; and although his popularity was not in proportion to his abilities, yet many of the children of God were confirmed and comforted by his ministry. In a letter to his friend Mrs. Carr he thus describes his journey and labours:—

“EDINBURGH, *September 17th, 1788.*

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

“God graciously brought me here, in about eighteen hours, without any accident happening all the way; though we were overtaken near the end of our journey by a thunder-storm, which set a farm-house on fire, and killed several cattle. The lightning was most awful indeed. Happy they who have an interest in Him who gives winds and storms their commissions, and directs their courses as it pleaseth Him. I find my employment here is rather above my strength. A long lecture in the morning, and two sermons in the afternoon, is their ordinary on the Lord’s day. I could do well with the lecture, and the last sermon, but the sermon after dinner distresses me much. Edinburgh is now one of the finest cities in Europe. For spacious streets, pompous buildings, and elegant squares, no place in Britain, except Bath, is to compare with it. Yet, after a while, all this

pomp will perish. The earth and all that is in it will be consumed. But there is a city whose foundation is immovably fixed, whose builder and maker is God Himself. John's description of it exceeds all our thoughts; and in this city may you and I have our portion and our home. So prays

“Your ever affectionate friend,

“JOSEPH COWNLEY.”

His health at his first arrival in Edinburgh nearly continued the same. But, by an unaccustomed succession of labour, the pain in his head increased to such a degree of violence, as to render him incapable of the duties of a regular preacher. His own account was: “My work overpowers me on the Lord's day, and no one knows what I suffer with my wretched head. I preached on Sunday about an hour, at the full extent of my voice, without bawling: I slept but little that night, and had some degree of fever, and the next day was very low.” He informed Mr. Wesley of his incapacity to endure the fatigues of his labour, who sympathized with his infirmities, and appointed him an assistant.

Mr. Cownley's ministry was not confined to Edinburgh. He visited Glasgow, Dunbar, and several other places in Scotland. In 1789 Mr. Jonathan Crowther came down to assist him. His respect for Mr. Cownley must not pass unnoticed. With a tenderness almost filial, he not only attended but anticipated his desires; preached for him when oppressed with pain, and helped to soothe a mind but too frequently overwhelmed with the gloom of disease. “May God reward him!” was the prayer of his friend; and I am happy to record this example of disinterested affection. Mr. Cownley's con-

tinuance in Scotland had been very doubtful for some time, from the appearance of a fatal disorder, and increasing debility, and at last became impossible. His labours were attended with so many unavoidable interruptions, that he was preventing a more regular supply of preaching. After an ineffectual struggle, which he unwillingly communicated, it was the opinion of his friends, and a persuasion of the impolicy of his remaining, that determined his resolution to return to England. Such was his holy and fervent piety, his love to the blessed Redeemer, and the lively conviction of his call to preach "the salvation of Jesus," that nothing but absolute necessity could have influenced his return. And I am persuaded, from his enlightened apprehensions of the nature of inward religion, that for its success in the world, his soul ever glowed with an equal ardour, which years had not impaired, nor weakness relaxed.

In the autumn of 1789 Mr. Cownley returned to Newcastle. Mr. Wesley at first expressed his disapprobation; but understanding that he had been attacked by the gout in his stomach, writes, "I am fully satisfied by your last letter, you returned in good time." He was received at Newcastle, and its neighbourhood, as one risen from the dead. He preached in the Orphan-House every Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and frequently on the Lord's-day morning: this was from choice, as he cautiously avoided the large congregations; and this was his constant practice, until his spirit returned to God.

In the former part of 1792 it was evident to many of his friends, that he was ripening for eternity. The concerns of his everlasting state absorbed all his soul. In prayer with his family and friends, the

tears flowed from his eyes, and his approaches to the throne of grace indicated the closest union with God. Indeed, life had no ties to retain him. He had outlived his first, and many of his warmest, friends ; for most of those who had shared his friendship, and divided his love, he had seen carried to the grave. In the decline of life there is something melancholy in the loss of our earliest intimates, with whom our weaknesses were familiar, and our thoughts ripened through experience into knowledge ; whose hopes and fears, and general character, resembled our own. But to him, futurity had prospects in reserve : though a Wesley, a Whitefield, a Perronet, had left him, yet it was not a separation for ever. "This mortal being only can decay ;" and the hopes of a blessed re-union cheered the approach of dissolution.

After the London Conference, he continued as usual his visits to the neighbouring societies. In September, on his return from Hallington to Prudhoe, he caught cold, which brought on the complaint in his stomach. He preached in the greatest agonies of pain, both there and at Ovington. His last sermon was from Psalm cv. 3, "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord ;" and with this, on the Lord's day, September 23d, concluded the labours of near half a century. The following day he returned to Newcastle, and the surgeon of the family was sent for, but prescribed without effect. On my return from the country that evening, I found Mr. Cownley to all appearance approaching his dissolution. We proposed sending for a physician, which, at first, Mr. Cownley opposed, saying, "No : my heavenly Father, He is the best Physician ; He is my only Physician." He then said, "Lord, after all that I have done, I am the chief of sinners." Soon after, I observed to him,

that the blood of the Redeemer was precious in our dying moments: he replied, "O, precious! O, precious! What should I do but for that?" Dr. Clarke then arrived, and, seeing him in the extreme of pain, said, "Do not be afraid." Mr. Cownley answered, "The fear of death, sir, has long since been removed! I am not afraid to die, but I am afraid lest I should become impatient under this affliction." When the physician withdrew, while the sweat fell in large drops from his face, he cried, with remarkable fervour, "Jesus, I am Thine! Thou art my only Physician; but if it is Thy will, and I have finished the work Thou hast committed to me, then take me to Thyself." He afterwards repeated, "Lord, how little have I done for Thee! Lord, how little have I done for Thee!"

The doctor's prescriptions had an immediate effect, and the rigour of the disorder almost instantly abated. I sat up with him that night: he rested a little, and in the morning was free from the severity of the pain. Conversing with me the following day, with a countenance expressive of regret, he said, "The doctor, by his timely applications, has brought me back into a world from which I should have been happy to escape." As it was my fortnight to be in Newcastle, I visited him every day, and had not the least hope of a complete recovery. He had received a letter, previous to his illness, from Josiah Dornford, Esq.: a few days before his death, he began an answer, which he never lived to finish. It is descriptive of his state and disorder; and will, I hope, be acceptable to the reader. As it was only a copy, there is no date nor address.

"I HAVE been for some time past confined to my

room with the gout in my stomach. I made an excursion into the country for a few weeks, and thought I had not been so well for a long time past ; which, under God, I attributed to the little exercise I underwent in going from place to place, with the change of air ; till on Friday evening before I came home I was seized with a pain in my breast which deprived me of three nights' rest ; nor could I be excused preaching, ill as I was. On Monday I came home, and that evening the pain increased so much that I thought I should have sunk under it. What my apothecary ordered me did not in the least answer his design. My children insisted on calling in a physician, and we have in this town a very eminent one from Scotland. He was presently with me ; and, after asking a few questions, ordered me a draught, and a blister on my breast. The Good Physician, I believe, directed him what to prescribe ; for in less than half an hour after taking the medicine I found relief. I mend very slowly ; for on any little exertion of my strength the pain returns : but on sitting down a while it ceases again. My appetite, which was quite gone, is much better, and I rest tolerably well ; but how and when it will end, I leave to Him in whose hands I am, and in whom is all my trust, and from whom is all my expectation. There is something very charming to me in those sweet lines of Dr. Watts :—

‘ Jesus, the vision of Thy face
Hath overpowering charms.
Scarce shall I feel Death's cold embrace,
If Thou art in my arms ! ’ ”

As there appeared the most flattering symptoms of a perfect recovery, he spoke with the greatest pleasure of once more seeing us at the Orphan-House ; but

his hopes, and our expectations, were equally disappointed. The Lord's day before his decease the consolations of God were so sweet that his cup of joy ran over. "I feel," he said, "such light and love in my heart, that, if I were carried to the chapel, I could sit and preach to the people." But his labours were ended; angels were ready to tune their harps, and the everlasting gates to lift up their heads, and admit a redeemed spirit into the regions of delight and happiness. October 8th, the day of his death, I sat with him for several hours. He conversed on a variety of subjects, with a vivacity that I have but seldom witnessed in his liveliest moments. A little after four o'clock I left him to fulfil an engagement with a friend: with difficulty I gained his consent, but promised to return immediately after preaching. It was the last farewell; and little did I think it was our final separation. Just as the service in the chapel was finished I received the message of his danger, and arrived in time to see his left eye close, and to feel the flutter of an expiring pulse. A few minutes after eight Mr. Cownley sat down to supper. His daughter Mary had withdrawn into an adjoining apartment: she heard a noise, returned, but he was speechless. The family were alarmed, his friends and the physician sent for, but all in vain.

"Death broke at once the vital chain,
And forced the soul the nearest way."

He reclined his head on the chair, and, without a struggle or a groan, expired. It is impossible for me to describe the affliction of his children: their loss, indeed, was irreparable. O, may they meet him at the resurrection of the just!

“He’s gone,—
 Lost for a while, and number’d with the dead;
 But there’s a day when I shall meet my friend:
 Meet him, O transport! and together spend
 Eternity itself, where pleasures cannot end.”

On Friday the corpse was brought into the chapel, and a discourse was delivered on the occasion to a numerous and afflicted audience, from John v. 35: “He was a burning and a shining light.” Then, attended by the singers, and a number of friends, his remains were carried to the Ballast-Hills; where, amidst tears and sighs, I committed him to the dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

I communicated the painful notice of his decease to several of his oldest friends. Mr. Hopper’s answer is a tribute to his memory:—

“BOLTON, *October 13th, 1792.*

“Is my dear, dear, and well-beloved Cownley dead? No; he sleepeth. Who can tell what my poor heart feels? I see the whole scene, from his first meeting Miss Massiot, in the city of Cork, to this precious moment. A serious drama indeed. The dream is ended; this momentary life is over; he is no more, no more here, no more in Newcastle. His body rests on the Ballast-Hills, and his soul in the bosom of the Lord. Farewell, dear brother Cownley! I shall hear and see thee no more on the stage of this mortal life; but I hope I shall soon behold thee among the glorified saints in the celestial Jerusalem, the city of our great God. There, there we shall meet to part no more. Glory be to God, I am the next man on the list. Time passeth, death approacheth, the Judge standeth at the door, and eternity is come. May I, may you, may all be

ready! Amen, and amen. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

“Your affectionate brother,
“CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.”

Thus lived and died Joseph Cownley; a man, though with defects common to all men, one of the fairest characters I ever knew. His mind was capable of the most abstruse investigations; and had he improved in proportion to his mental resources, he must have secured the reputation of genius and learning, as well as that of a minister and a Christian. His abilities as a public speaker have been appreciated by an unsuspected and competent judge. Mr. Wesley did not hesitate to say, “He is one of the best preachers in England.” His discourses, though generally plain, were distinct and argumentative; not daubed by the mere finery of phrase, nor ornamented by affected sublimity: he pleased more by the gravity and force of his sentiments, than by the elegance or graces of his style. But, what is far better, by an enlivening pathos he reached the heart, and inspired love to God and benevolence to man. He was averse to a noisy and uncertain popularity. His ambition was, not to be distinguished, but to be useful; and, although he gained the applause of the serious, he never sought the admiration of the multitude. He dreaded extremes. His piety was rational, equally removed from formality and enthusiasm; and, as his affections were in heaven, his opinions were regulated, not by the impulse of a moment, but the revelation of God. His learning was confined, though his knowledge was extensive. He had travelled “history’s enormous round;” and there are but few books on divinity in the English language but what he had read. From a

disposition naturally reserved, he conversed but little in company. His manners were uniform, without the austerities of an ascetic, or the affected singularities of the mystic. He united the solemn with the familiar, and was at once cheerful and serious. As his feelings were nicely sensible, his humanity was almost an extreme; and if in anything he bordered on extravagance, it was in his treatment of the brute creation. But this was a failing which seeks no extenuation, and solicits no forgiveness; for we cannot but admire the man who can say,

"No dying brute I view in anguish here,
But from my melting eye descends a tear."

Though constantly afflicted, his tempers were not embittered by disease, nor soured by impatience; and he endured with submission what had baffled the skill of man and the powers of medicine. Improper complaint seldom escaped his lips; and when on the rack of pain, his language was, "The will of the Lord be done." In his walk as a Christian, his meekness was remarkable. For upwards of forty years he had scarcely an enemy; and when, towards the close of life, he was disturbed by one who had been his friend, his severest remark was, "I did not think he would have used me so." An unwillingness to offend has sometimes exposed him to the suspicion of irresolution. But it must be remembered that he dreaded the consequences of argument and debate; for experience had convinced him that his feelings were too susceptible for a pointed opposition. Hurt at the least appearance of discord, whenever it occurred he instantly departed, and no persuasion could influence his return. If, on some occasions, this was not agreeable, we cannot but approve the motive; and happy would it be for society were all

men influenced by his principles. Part of his time was held sacred to the poor. He sought out the asylums of wretchedness; in comforting the mourners, establishing the pious, and rousing the careless,

“He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.”

His union with the Redeemer was almost uninterrupted. His was not a transient, but a constant flame. As God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, so he walked in the light as He is in the light; and the life which he lived was by faith in the Son of God. His love to his brethren, and the church of God, is as worthy of imitation as it is above all praise. Nothing could alienate his affections; neither the certainty of labour, nor the promises of reward: his heart was fixed, and he said, “This people shall be my people, and their God shall be mine.” He had the clearest ideas of the religion of Jesus, and an engaging method of communicating those conceptions. Hundreds of careless sinners were awakened under his ministry, and he is the father of many spiritual children; children who are still living to God, though many sleep in Jesus. Persuasion hung upon his lips, and at times he appeared to speak with an authority more than human. Alternately he was a son of thunder and of consolation. By the terrors of the Lord he persuaded men, and by the application of the promises he confirmed the wavering and comforted the doubting believer. His end was the consequent issue of his life. Death had lost its terrors. He loved that which is the dread of the impious. He said, “It is better for me to be dissolved, that I may be with Jesus;” and, without a struggle or a groan, he committed his soul into the hands of his faithful Creator.

In him the church lost a faithful pastor, his children a parent of indescribable tenderness, and the world a burning and a shining light.

I shall make no apology for what I have written, as I have not wilfully misrepresented anything in this narrative of Mr. Cownley. I have certainly kept in mind, as a motto,

“When actions wear a dubious face,
Put the best meaning on the case;”

and the impartial will admit that it is invidious to criticise defects when they are nothing in comparison of superior virtues. The principal facts were communicated by Mr. Cownley, and confirmed by his papers, though he kept no journal of his travels or experience. I am perfectly satisfied that I have at least endeavoured to rescue from oblivion a man whose memory will be no disgrace to Methodism; and, our enemies being judges, whose life and conversation would have done credit to any society. O, may my life and death be like his!

JOHN GAULTER.

ALNWICK, *May 24th*, 1794.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS OLIVERS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at a village called Tregonan, in Montgomeryshire, in 1725. My father died in December, 1729. My mother was so afflicted on account of his death, that she died of a broken heart in March following; leaving me and another son, not two years old, behind her. My mother's father, Mr. Richard Humphries, took care of my brother, and when he died, left him to the care of his eldest son.

My father's uncle, a man of property, took care of me while he lived; and when he died, left me a small fortune; ordering in his will, that the interest of it should be employed in bringing me up, and that I should receive the principal when I came of age.

The person to whose care he left me was Mrs. Elizabeth Tudor, eldest daughter to his son-in-law, Mr. Thomas Tudor, an eminent farmer, in the parish of Fordon, in the same county. And as she was unmarried, she committed me to her father's care, in whose house I was boarded till I was eighteen years of age.

As soon as I was capable, I was sent to school, where I received such learning as was thought necessary. And as to religion, I was taught to say my prayers morning and evening; to repeat my Catechism; to sing psalms; and to go to church, in general, twice every Sabbath-day.

But my carnal mind soon discovered itself, by prompting me, not only to a great variety of childish follies, but also to a multitude of heinous sins; particularly lying, and taking the name of God in vain. In these I was confirmed by the examples of all about me; for, with grief I mention it, I knew not so much as a single person (except an old man or two, whom we all supposed to be crazy) who made any scruple of these or of various other acts of wickedness. There was one man in the parish, who exceeded all the rest in cursing, swearing, and horrid blasphemies. This hellish art he studied with all his might. His custom was to compound twenty or thirty different expressions, to make one long and horrid oath! I never heard of any telling him he did wrong; but many laughed at him, and admired his cleverness; and some even strove to imitate him. Among the rest, I was one; and so apt a scholar was I, in these diabolical practices, that, before I was fifteen years of age, I vied with my infernal instructor. It is horrid to think how often I have cursed the wind and the weather, the souls of cows and horses, yea, the very heart's blood of stones, trees, gates, and doors! So that on this, and on various other accounts, I was generally reckoned the worst boy who had been in those parts for the last twenty or thirty years.

At eighteen years of age I was bound apprentice; but by this time I was become so idle, that I did not half learn my business. Dancing and keeping com-

pany engrossed my whole soul ; and was it not for some small restraints, they would have employed my whole time. Accordingly, the very first day I was at full liberty, I gave scope to my inclination to such a degree, that out of sixteen nights and days, I was fifteen of them without ever being in bed.

For four or five years I was greatly entangled with a farmer's daughter, whose sister was married to Sir I. P., of N—wt—n, in that county. What

“Strange reverse of human fates !”

For one sister was wooed by, and married to, a baronet, who was esteemed one of the finest men in the country. When she died, Sir I. was almost distracted. Presently after her funeral, he published an elegy on her of a thousand verses ! For her sake he said,—

“O that the fleecy care had been my lot,
Some lonely cottage on some verdant spot !”

For some time he daily visited her in her vault, and at last took her up, and kept her in his bed-chamber for several years.

On the other hand, her sister, who was but little inferior in person, fell into the hands of a most insignificant young man, who was a means of driving her almost to an untimely end. I cannot omit giving some intimation of this particular, seeing all who are acquainted with my former life know this to be one great aggregate of my folly and wickedness ; and seeing it is that which lay heaviest on my mind, both before and after my conversion ; and which to this day I remember with peculiar shame and sorrow. However, God, who often brings good out of evil, made it a means (though a remote one) of my conversion.

For such was the clamour of the people, and the uneasiness of my own mind, that I determined to leave the country. Accordingly, I set off for Shrewsbury. Here I continued for some time; and among various things which I have much reason to be ashamed of, I went one night to the Methodist meeting; and out of mere wantonness, made use of some very indecent language as I came out. I also went one Sabbath-day to St. Chad's church, in company with a very wicked young man. We got into the organ-loft, and while the late Dr. Adams was preaching, I was wantonly cursing him, and almost every sentence which proceeded out of his mouth. This was matter of huge diversion to my companion, who expressed his hearty approbation of my profane and impious behaviour, by ridiculous laughter, and the like. O, how much is it to be lamented that all this while we were called Christians, Protestants, and Churchmen!

From Shrewsbury, I went into a country village, about three miles from the town. Here I was greatly reduced in my circumstances: my conscience also stared me dreadfully in the face, as it had frequently done on many former occasions. I thought, "I live a most wretched life! If I do not repent and forsake my sins, I shall certainly be damned: I wish I could repent of and forsake them: if I could but hate them as well as I love them, I should then be able to lay them aside; but till then I despair of doing it. For I have always gone to church: I have frequently prayed and resolved against my evil practices; and yet I cannot leave them." I then thought, "I will receive the sacrament, and try what that will do." Accordingly, I borrowed a "Week's Preparation," and went through it regularly, reading on my knees the

meditations and prayers for each day. On Sunday I went to the Lord's table, and spent the following week in going over the second part of the book, in the same manner I had done the first. For this fortnight I kept tolerably clear of sin : but when it was over, I returned the book with many thanks, and then returned to my former practices.

From hence I went to Wrexham. I had not been here long, before I was taken ill of a violent fever, of which most people expected me to die. As it was known that I had little or no money, a Methodist (Mr. John Memis, afterwards Dr. Memis, of Aberdeen, who was then a journeyman to an apothecary in the town) visited me without fee or reward ; and I believe, under God, saved my life.

When I was got out of danger, I found great thankfulness to God for sparing me ; and as soon as I was able, I went to church twice every day, and read books of devotion at home ; and frequently wept bitterly over what I read or heard ; for I saw very clearly, that if I had died at that time, I should certainly have gone to hell. I therefore again resolved to forsake my sins, and to become a new man.

But before I was fully recovered, my resolutions vanished away, and I returned to my former practices. Accordingly, being one day at the house of one Mr. Jones, who was then a Methodist, I swore by my Maker. Mr. Jones said, "Young man, what a pity is it that you, who are so lately brought back from the borders of the grave, should already curse and swear !" I bowed, and thanked him for his seasonable reproof, and esteemed him ever after. Several times I followed him to and from church ; listening, with great attention, to what passed about religion

between him and others. At last I got him by himself, and asked him many questions concerning the way to heaven. When we came near his house, I asked, "How do you intend to spend the remainder of this Sabbath?" He answered, "In reading, meditation, prayer, and singing of hymns and psalms." When he was gone a little way from me, I turned about to look at him, and thought, "This is an odd man indeed! However, I wish I was like him; but, at present, I cannot spend my Sabbaths without mirth and pleasure." I therefore gave up my acquaintance with him, and soon became as wicked as ever.

Not long after, a young man and I, after committing a most notorious and shameful act of arch-villany, of which I was the contriver, agreed to leave the country together. Accordingly, we set off about one in the morning; he leaving his apprenticeship, and I several debts, behind us, which was generally my case wherever I went. About one o'clock the next day we got to Shrewsbury. While we were in a public-house, my companion began to curse and swear at a Welsh Methodist, who sat quietly in the chimney-corner. On this I cursed my companion, and said, "What is that to you, suppose he be a Methodist? The poor man is quiet, and does not affront us; therefore, you are a scoundrel for affronting him:" and so enraged was I at the ill-usage this poor man received from my companion, that I was very near striking him on that account.

The next day we got to Bridgenorth, and put up at a public-house, the landlady of which was a Methodist; which we soon discovered by her conversation. We winked at each other, put on very grave looks, and asked, if there were any more

Methodists in that town. She answered, "I thank God there are a few." We continued our affected gravity all that evening, and the next morning, while we were in her house. But when we were got a little way out of town, we laughed, and held our sides, and cursed and swore till we were quite weary; because she thanked God, that there were such wretches in the town.

After some days we got to Bristol. A few hours after our arrival, a sharper, pretending to pick up a sixpence, enticed us into a public-house; where, in about half-an-hour, he stripped us of all our money, to the last penny. However, we got into lodging that night, and the next day we got business. I had not been long in that city, before I went to lodge with one who had been a Methodist; but was now, at times, a slave to drunkenness. His wife too had once been a religious woman; but was now eaten up with the cares of the world. There was also a lukewarm Moravian in the house. With these I had various disputes; particularly about election, which I could never believe. One day the Moravian and I quarrelled so highly, that he struck me; and as he was a tall, lusty man, I knew I should have no chance in fighting him. However, for a whole hour I cursed and swore in such a manner as I never heard before or since; and perhaps in such a manner as is seldom equalled on earth, or exceeded even in hell itself. And what was the greatest aggravation; it was all in confirmation of a lie! For though I swore with all the rage of a fiend, and with almost all the diversified language of hell, that I would prosecute the man; and though I wished, perhaps not less than an hundred times over, that vengeance, ruin, destruction, and damnation might lie on body

and soul for ever, if I did not do it immediately; yet I never so much as attempted to do it, from that hour to this. Indeed, such a habit of horrid swearing had I acquired, that though I saw I was dreadfully wrong, and, at times, wished and laboured to break it off; yet, on the smallest occasion, I was carried away, as by a mighty torrent: yea, I daily and hourly did it without any provocation at all; and frequently not knowing what I did. The poor, drunken apostate was often so shocked, that one time he said, "I wish you were out of my house; for you are such a horrid swearer, I cannot bear you." How astonishing is it, that a person who had ever known the fear of God did not instantly turn such a wretch out of doors; that the earth did not then open, and swallow him up alive; and that an infinitely holy God did not take him at his word, and send him quick into hell, to reap that punishment he had so long deserved, yea, and so often wished for, dared, and defied!

As I was going along one night, I met a multitude of people; and asked one of them, where they had been. She answered, "To hear Mr. Whitefield." She also told me, he was to preach the next night. I thought, "I have often heard of Mr. Whitefield, and have sung songs about him: I will go and hear what he has to say." Accordingly, I went the next evening, but was too late. The following evening I was determined to be in time: accordingly, I went near three hours before the time. When the service began, I did little but look about me; but on seeing the tears trickle down the cheeks of some who stood near me, I became more attentive.

The text was, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" When this sermon began, I was certainly

a dreadful enemy to God, and to all that is good; and one of the most profligate and abandoned young men living; but by the time it was ended, I was become a new creature. For, in the first place, I was deeply convinced of the great goodness of God towards me all my life; particularly, in that he had given His Son to die for me. I had also a far clearer view of all my sins; particularly, my base ingratitude towards Him. These discoveries quite broke my heart, and caused showers of tears to trickle down my cheeks. I was likewise filled with an utter abhorrence of my evil ways, and was much ashamed that ever I had walked in them. And as my heart was thus turned from all evil, so it was powerfully inclined to all that is good. It is not easy to express what strong desires I had for God and His service; and what resolutions I had to seek and serve Him in future: in consequence of which, I broke off all my evil practices, and forsook all my wicked and foolish companions, without delay; and gave myself up to God and His service with my whole heart. O, what reason have I to say, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

When I returned to my lodgings, the people saw that something remarkable had befallen me; and, as they knew not where I had been, could not imagine what it was. They were greatly astonished the following days, on seeing me weep almost incessantly. They first judged that I had lost some near relation; but when I told them I had not, they judged it to be some disappointment in love. At last they found, by my great reformation, that it was a concern for religion which so deeply affected me. When they put it to me, I frankly told them the whole matter: and, though the best of them was but half-hearted

in religion, yet they all rejoiced at the mighty change they saw in me.

The first Sunday after I was awakened, I went to the cathedral at six in the morning. When the *Te Deum* was read, I felt as if I had done with earth, and was praising God before His throne! No words can set forth the joy, the rapture, the awe, and reverence I felt. At eight I went to hear Mr. Whitefield: at ten I went to Christchurch. When the invitation to the Lord's supper, which was to be administered the next Sunday, was read, it pierced my very heart, and caused me to weep bitterly. At the same time I determined, at all events, to partake of it. I went to church again at two in the afternoon; at five I again heard Mr. Whitefield; and concluded the public worship of that day at an Anabaptist meeting. Thus, though I had spent the whole Friday before in the works of the devil; now, partly by hearing the word, and partly by reading, meditation, and abundance of private prayer, I spent the whole of this day in acts of most fervent devotion.

The next day I bought a "Week's Preparation," which, for a long time, I read on my knees, both by day and by night. This, and the Bible, were far more precious to me than rubies; and God only knows how often I bedewed them with my tears; especially those parts of them which speak of the love or sufferings of Christ.

As to secret prayer, I was, for some time, almost continually on my knees. By this means I soon grew lame on one knee, and went about limping: in a short time my other knee failed, so that it was with difficulty I walked at all. And so earnest was I, that I used by the hour together, to wrestle with all the might of my body and soul, till I almost

expected to die on the spot. What with bitter cries, (unheard by any but God and myself,) together with torrents of tears, which were almost continually trickling down my cheeks, my throat was often dried up, as David says, and my eyes literally failed, while I waited for God.

As I had just before been so notoriously abandoned, none of my carnal acquaintance had much objection to my reformation; only some of them thought I carried matters too far. One said, "You may repent of your sins without so much weeping, and without walking the streets with your hat slouched about your ears." The young man who came with me from Wrexham lay near my heart. Whenever he came in my way, I used to reason with him about the necessity of repentance. I would entreat him with all the love and tenderness my soul was capable of; and while I was doing it, I sometimes seemed as if I could weep my life away over him: but, though he took it in good part, I could not prevail on him to leave his sins, and to walk with me in the way to heaven.

The love I had for Mr. Whitefield was inexpressible. I used to follow him as he walked the streets, and could scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet. And as to the people of God, I dearly loved to be with them, and wished to be a member of their society; but knew not how to accomplish it. At last I ventured to mention it to one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers, but he discouraged me; and therefore I was obliged to give it up.

After three or four months I left Bristol, and went to Bradford, in Wiltshire. As I went, I fell in company with some who were going thither, and asked if there were any Methodists in Bradford;

and on their telling me there were, I rejoiced exceedingly. When I had got to Bradford, I soon found out the place of preaching, and embraced the first opportunity of hearing the word; and so constant was I therein, that for two years, I believe, I did not omit a single sermon, either late or early. I also heard with deep attention, and in general with many tears. And this I did wherever I heard the word preached, whether at church, or elsewhere.

My custom was, when I went to the house of God, to fall on my knees, and with great humility and earnestness of soul to implore a blessing upon what I was going to hear; I then rose up, and fixed my eyes on the preacher, and scarcely ever moved them till all was over. This occasioned a gentleman of the town, whom I reproved for swearing, to say, "When you come to church, you fix your eyes on the parson, and never move them till he has done."

As to the people of God in this place, I loved them as dearly as I did those I had left in Bristol; and longed to be united with them in Christian fellowship, but knew not how. When the public preaching was over on a Sunday evening, and I, along with the multitude, was shut out from the society, I used to go into the field at the back of the preaching-house, and listen while they sang the praises of God. I would then weep bitterly at the thought, that God's people were there, praising His name together, while I, a poor and wretched fugitive, was not permitted to be among them. I would then look upon the house, and think, "Under that blessed roof the servants of God are now assembled; but I, alas, a foolish virgin, am shut out!" and then I would weep again, as if my very heart would burst within me. When they came out, I have often followed at a small distance those of them

I thought most in earnest, particularly the preacher and his company, that I might hear something further concerning the ways of God. I often followed them near two miles, and then returned praising God for this further instruction I had picked up, as it were by stealth, and meditating thereon all the way home.

After some time, I was taken notice of by some of the principal members of the society, who desired some young men to inquire who I was. They did so ; and also asked me if I desired to join the society. My heart leaped for joy on hearing that ; and I told them I should be exceedingly glad to do it. They then took me to the preacher, who gave me a note of admittance, which I received with great thankfulness. As I returned home, just as I came to the bottom of the hill, at the entrance of the town, a ray of light, resembling the shining of a star, descended through a small opening in the heavens, and instantaneously shone upon me. In that instant my burden fell off, and I was so elevated, that I felt as if I could literally fly away to heaven. This was the more surprising to me, as I had always been (what I still am) so prejudiced in favour of rational religion, as not to regard visions or revelations, perhaps, so much as I ought to do. But this light was so clear, and the sweetness and other effects attending it were so great, that though it happened about twenty-seven years ago, the several circumstances thereof are as fresh on my remembrance, as if they had happened but yesterday.

I now thought myself happy, as I had got among the people of God, and had received such a token of His favour. But these things were so far from making me secure or careless, that they stirred me

up to greater diligence in all the works of God. For now, partly by the public preaching, partly by the various exhortations I received in the society, and partly by conversing with the people in private, I received more light, and my conscience grew more abundantly tender. Therefore, in my actions, I could not do an act of injustice,—no, not to the value of a pin; or in any instance do to another what I would not he should do unto me. In my words, I could not mention the name of God but when it was necessary; nor even then, but with deep awe and reverence: and as to jesting and foolish talking, mentioning the faults of an absent person, talking of worldly things on the Lord's day, these I abstained from with all my might. As to my thoughts, intentions, and desires, my constant inquiry was, "Is this thought, intention, or desire, to the glory of God?" If I found it was not, I durst not indulge it. In eating and drinking, I took care to do it to the glory of God: to this end I received my daily food, nearly in the same manner as I did the body and blood of Christ. As to mental prayer, I used it daily and hourly; and for one while my rule was, to employ five minutes out of every quarter of an hour therein. I also made it matter of conscience to examine myself daily; and to humble myself before God for everything I saw or feared had been amiss. Upon the whole, I truly lived by faith. I saw God in everything; the heavens, the earth, and all therein, showed me something of Him; yea, even from a drop of water, a blade of grass, or a grain of sand, I often received instruction.

As a member of the society, I was careful not only to receive strength from them, but also to stir them up to greater diligence. Among other things, I used

to run over a great part of the town to call them up to the morning preaching. If I found any of them guilty of evil-speaking, or of mentioning news or worldly business on the Sabbath, or of useless conversation, I always gave them a very serious and loving reproof; at the same time advising them to be more watchful for the time to come. If I heard the people of the world swear, or take the name of God in vain, I always made it matter of conscience to reprove them lovingly and earnestly, and in the most unexceptionable language I could use.

But, notwithstanding all that God had done for me on the one hand, and all that I had done on the other, I was still liable to doubt of the favour of God. Early one morning, as I read in the "Pilgrim's Progress" concerning the happy death of Christian, I wept bitterly, for fear my latter end would not be like his. I continued weeping for six or seven hours. At last my doubt turned into despair: I imagined that there was no mercy for me, that Christ died for all but me! I then wept bitterly, and wished, "O that I had been anybody else! then there would have been mercy for me." At last I began to murmur against God; and I was tempted to speak and think blasphemously of Him, and to resolve to pray no more. But going into my chamber, and seeing a New Testament lie in the window, I thought, "I will open it, and perhaps I shall see something that will do me good." I took it up; but instantly threw it down again, for fear of meeting with something that would aggravate, rather than remove, my despair. However, I at last ventured to take it up; and on opening it, cast my eyes on those words of St. Paul: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the

truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." This struck me exceedingly; on which I reasoned thus: "Will God have all men to be saved? Then I am not excluded. Did Christ give Himself for all? Then He gave Himself for me. And is He to be testified in due time? Then I believe, that in due time He will again reveal Himself to me." But what struck me most of all were those words in the following verse: "I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting." These words tore up by the roots my temptation to pray no more, to be wrathful against God, and to doubt of His mercy. I therefore fell on my knees before Him, and prayed and wept in earnest; and rose up much ashamed of my unbelief, and greatly encouraged to hope in His mercy. Some time after, when I was got again into doubts and fears, I opened my Testament on these words: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." I laid fast hold on those words,—“the grace which is to be brought unto you.” From this time I fully believed that all the grace I wanted would be brought unto me. It was not long after this, that I heard Mr. William Roberts preach, when he strongly exhorted us to believe, and to venture on the mercy of God. In that instant I did lay hold; I did venture to believe more fully than ever I had done before; and fear and sorrow fled away.

From my first awakening, I had a great desire to tell the world what God had done for my soul. And as I grew more experienced, this desire grew stronger and stronger. At last I thought I was called to

preach : this I communicated to the young men that met in band with me. They proposed a day of solemn fasting on the occasion ; which we accordingly kept. They then advised me to make a trial : I did so ; and many approved of my gifts, but others thought I ought to be more established. Indeed, it was often said that I was too earnest to hold it long ; and instances were produced of some who had been exceedingly earnest for a season, but afterwards fell away. At the time I began to preach, my custom was to get all my worldly business done, myself cleaned, and all my Sunday's apparel put out on Saturday night ; which sometimes I could not accomplish before twelve o'clock. After this, I frequently sat up till one or two in the morning, reading, praying, and examining myself ; and have often rose at four, but never later than five o'clock, and gone two miles into the country, through all weathers, to meet a few poor people, from six to seven. By eight I returned to hear the preaching. I have then gone seven miles on foot to preach at one ; then three or four miles further to preach at five ; and after all, have had five or six miles more to walk, before I got home. And as in everything I did, I put forth all my strength, I have been often so wearied, that I could scarce get over a stile ; or when I got home, go up into my chamber, to ask a blessing on the labours of the day : indeed, before I began to preach I was so earnest in all acts of public and private worship, that on a Sunday night I was commonly more wearied than on any other night in the week.

For some time after I began to preach, I had frequent doubts concerning my call. One time, as I was going to preach at Coleford, I was tempted to

believe that I was running before I was sent. As I went on, the temptation grew stronger and stronger. At last I resolved to turn back. I had not gone back above thirty or forty yards, before I began to think, "This may be a temptation of the devil." On that I took out my Testament, and, on opening it, the words I cast my eyes on were, "He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." I could not help looking on this as the voice of God to me : therefore I took courage to turn about, and pursue my journey to Coleford.

When I had been a local preacher about twelve months, the small-pox made dreadful havoc in and about Bradford. So universal was the infection, that in all that populous town, and the neighbouring villages, scarce a single person escaped who had not had it before. It was also so mortal, that six or seven were buried in a night in Bradford only. As I had never had it, it was often suggested to me to leave those parts : but I thought, "I am in the hands of a wise and gracious God ; and also in the place where His providence has fixed me ; and therefore, whether I live or die, I will continue where I am, and commit myself to His wise disposal."

About a week after Michaelmas I was taken ill, and in the beginning was very comfortable in my soul. It was soon discovered that I should have a vast quantity, occasioned, as was supposed, by the ill-management of an ignorant old woman, who gave me heating things. I had not been ill above a day or two, before that pattern of practical Christianity, Mr. Richard Pearce, came to see me. Among other things, he asked what money I had. I said, "But little." He then encouraged me not to fear, telling

me that as I was far from my own country, he would take care I had all things necessary. Accordingly, he turned away the old woman, and sent me one of the best nurses in the town. He next sent the chief apothecary the place afforded; and lastly, Dr. Clark, the most experienced physician in all that country. But, notwithstanding all these helps, I was soon one of the most deplorable objects ever seen. I was stone-blind for five weeks; my head was swelled to such an enormous size, that many thought it would drop from my shoulders; my whole body was covered with one scab, a great part of an inch thick; and though the room I lay in was large and airy, the stench was so great, that, though the town was full of the small-pox, neither the doctor nor apothecary could come near me without stopping their mouths and noses as close as they were able. Many others who came to see me ran down stairs vomiting; and some declared, they never smelt a carrion in a ditch which was so offensive. Mrs. Antill, at whose house I lodged, told me and my family, a day or two ago, that though she came only occasionally into my room, yet, when she went out into the town on an errand, the smell of her clothes was so offensive, that the people could scarce bear to meet her; and that when she returned, such a stream of noxious effluvia met her in the front-door, that she was scarce able to enter her house. It is therefore no wonder, that all who saw or heard of me, judged that I was, by many degrees, the most afflicted of any who lived or died, either in town or country. Dr. Clark declared, "Though I have been fifty years in practice, I never saw any one so ill of this disorder before."

The first time I was got up, to have my bed made, was on New-Year's-day; but I was not near recovered

at Lady-day. Yet all this time, though I was so extremely afflicted, I was never known to give one groan, and but once (Mrs. Antill says, not once) to say I was ill: my constant answer to all who asked me how I did, was, "I am indifferent." This made a great noise both in town and country; for the doctor, apothecary, and others, often mentioned this circumstance when others complained. Yea, Mrs. Antill told us, that long after I was recovered, and had left the country, Dr. Clark often mentioned, with astonishment, how quiet I lay, and what answers I constantly gave, though I was so dreadfully afflicted.

From this account we learn, first, that none ought to give or take anything heating, in the beginning of this disorder. Secondly, that while there is life, none ought to despair of recovering, however ill they are. And, thirdly, that no degree of affliction is too great for the grace of God to enable us to bear with resignation, meekness, and quietness.

Before my conversion, I had contracted a great number of debts; and, by means of this illness, they were greatly multiplied. This was a cause of great uneasiness to me; and, in particular, whenever I read or heard that Scripture, "Owe no man anything," I felt as great confusion, shame, and sorrow, as if I had actually stolen every sum I owed. As soon, therefore, as I was able, I set out for my own country to receive my fortune, which had lain so long in Mr. Tudor's hands. As I passed through the country, I preached in most of the societies which lay in my way; and believe it was not altogether in vain.

When I got home, my old acquaintance got about me; but when they saw such an alteration in me, they were astonished; and the more so, as they had

never seen the like before. As soon as I had received my money, I bought a horse, and rode far and near, paying all I owed in my own country. This made a great noise, and confirmed the people in their opinion, that the change they saw in me was of God. My uncle Tudor, indeed, attributed it to another cause. He said, "Thou hast been so wicked that thou hast seen the devil; and that has occasioned so great a change in thee." At last, my aunt Tudor and others desired me to preach the next Sabbath-day; to which I consented. On Saturday I fell in company with Lord H—re—rd, who had heard, that I was turned Methodist, and was going to preach in the parish. He damned me; and swore, if there was a pool of water near, he would throw me in. I was going to reply, but he would not suffer me. As we were going the same way, I followed at a distance; and every now and then he turned about, swearing that he would put me in the stocks, and send me to prison. When we came near a pinfold, where there was a pair of stocks, I turned over a stile to a neighbour's house: on this, my lord swore, that if they took me in, he would drive the country of them. I therefore judged it prudent to turn another way.

The next day I went with my uncle Tudor to church and sacrament: I went with him also to evening prayers. Just as the minister was concluding, his lordship came to church. As soon as the people were got out, my lord said, "Mr. Tudor, why do you harbour that fellow about your house?" My uncle answered, "Where should he be, my lord, but at home?" He then desired my uncle to send me out of the parish; but my uncle said, "He is in his own parish, my lord, and about his own business."

On this I stepped forward. When my lord saw me, he said, "Wh—wh—wh—wh—why dost thou dress like a parson?" (For I was dressed in blue.) I said, "What I wear, my lord, is my own, and not your lordship's." He said, "If thou dost not leave the country, I will send thee to the stocks." I answered, "I regard not the stocks, my lord: your lordship may send me to Montgomery, if you please. But before I go, I must tell your lordship, that I was shocked exceedingly yesterday, on hearing a person of your rank, who is also a magistrate, curse and swear as your lordship did, when you saw me on the common." As this conversation passed in the presence of almost the whole parish, many were well pleased to hear my lord so plainly dealt with: but my lord himself was enraged exceedingly, and called for one and another to come and take me to the stocks; but several of those he called, ran away. At last he said to his footman, "Go you, and take him away;" and then called one of his tenants, "John Parry! John Parry! I say, John Parry! come you, and take him to the stocks." I smiled, and said, "My lord, you need not call these lusty men; for if you send a child, it will do as well; seeing I shall make no resistance." When we were gone a little way, the footman swore, he had much rather carry his master to the devil, than me to the stocks; and Mr. Parry swore the same. I said, "Pray do not curse and swear, or you will be as bad as my lord." But what was most remarkable, though such a multitude of young and old were present, so universally was my lord's conduct disapproved of, that not one of them went with us, but my aunt Tudor; nor did any one come after us, but another uncle.

When we came to the stocks, my aunt said,

“What do you now intend to do?” Mr. Parry said, “We must put him in, or run the country.” She said, “You and I have lived in friendship for many years, and I shall be sorry now to hurt you. Go, therefore, and ask my lord, if he will indemnify you: for if he is put in, somebody shall pay for it.” Mr. Parry went, and found my lord had taken the parson and my uncle Tudor into the public-house; where the parson, who had administered the sacrament that day, tarried drinking with my lord, from four in the afternoon till eleven at night; and my uncle, who had received it, till seven the next morning. This I mention, as a sad specimen of the religion of my native country. When Mr. Parry came to my lord, he asked, “Have you put him in?” Mr. Parry answered, “No, my lord; for I am threatened.” On this my lord jumped up, and drew his sword; and away ran the farmer, and my lord after him, both cursing and swearing like devils. When Mr. Parry returned, my aunt asked, “Well! what are you to do?” He cursed my lord, and said, “Do! we must put him in!” The footman swore, “I will never put him in;” and the farmer did the same. And as I was quite passive and cheerful, my aunt said, “Thou shalt not put thyself in.” I answered, “This is very hard! I am to go into the stocks; and you both swear you will not put me in; and my aunt says, I shall not put myself in. Well, then, I will tell you how it shall be: one of you shall hold up the stocks, and the other shall take hold of my leg; and by so doing, you shall both put me in.” After scratching their heads, they consented: accordingly, one of them lifted up the stocks, and the other put his hand under the calf of my leg, and just put it in, and then bade me take it out again: however, we

stood near the stocks the whole time, which was two hours, talking about religion. Among other things, Mr. Parry said, "It is pity you did not tell the people you would preach in the stocks." I said, "It is very true; and I am sorry I did not think of it."

The next morning, through my aunt's persuasion, I rode to Montgomery, to an attorney: but he not being at home, my uncle advised me to let the matter drop; and, indeed, I was easily persuaded to do this, as I found so little of the spirit of resentment.

A few years ago, Mrs. G——n, of Shrewsbury, told me, that Lord H. told her the affair; and added, that if any more of them came into his parish, he would serve them in the same manner. She said, "My lord, you judge of this people according to the idle reports you hear of them; but I know them to be the servants of the living God. Therefore, my lord, beware what you do, or God will punish you one day or other." He paused awhile, and then said, "Cousin G., if I had known this before, I would not have done what I did; but for the time to come, I will have nothing to do with them."

After I had paid every farthing I owed in my own country, I went to Shrewsbury to do the same. But many in that place had quite forgotten me, as well as what I owed them. Those I had defrauded by any unlucky trick, I told them of it, paid the full value, and offered them interest, if it was only for a few shillings. One instance of this was, a companion of mine had defrauded a Quaker of a shilling; and because I was concerned in laying the scheme, I thought I ought to pay him. When I went to inquire for him, I found him in jail, and told him the whole affair. I then paid the shilling, and offered him interest, which he refused. He then asked me, "Who art thou! Art thou the

young man who preached in the Methodist meeting, concerning whom there is so much noise in the town?" I said, "I am." He said, "Wilt thou come next first-day, and preach to the prisoners?" I said, "I will." Accordingly, I went and preached in the prison chapel; and many were glad to hear what God had done for my soul. Indeed, I found that going to a place, and paying every one what I owed him, was frequently a means of great good; especially, as I was always careful when people thanked me, to commend the grace of God; telling them, "You ought to thank God; for if He had not converted me, I never should have thought of paying you."

From Shrewsbury I went to Whitchurch, on purpose to pay sixpence. I then went to Wrexham, and satisfied every one there. Next I rode to Chester and Liverpool, and preached often in both places. In the first of them, several persons were turned from the evil of their way. I then went to Manchester, and from thence to Birmingham, and so on to Bristol. When I had paid all I owed in this city, I returned to Bradford. I went to Mr. Pearce immediately, and told him all I had done. I then asked him for his account; but he bade me go and satisfy every other creditor. I did so: but when I came again, he told me he had no account against me. I saw the hand of God in this; for I had already paid about seventy debts, which I could not accomplish till I had sold my horse, bridle, and saddle. However, I was at last clear of the world; and, by that means, was delivered from a burden which had lain heavy upon me ever since my conversion, and which had cost me many prayers and tears.

With the small remains of my money, and with a little credit, I set up in my business. But before I

was half settled in it, Mr. Wesley desired I would give it up, and go immediately into Cornwall. I was glad of the opportunity, as believing it to be the will of God concerning me. I therefore disposed of my effects, and paid the few debts I had again contracted. But I was not able to buy another horse; and therefore, with my boots on my legs, my great coat on my back, and my saddle-bags, with my books and linen, across my shoulder, I set out on foot, October 24th, 1753.

From Bradford I went to Coleford, and from thence to Tiverton. I had not been many weeks there before Mr. Bidgood asked me, why I had not a horse. I told him frankly the truth of the matter. He then desired me to buy one, and he would pay for him. I begged to be excused from accepting such an offer, but he still urged me. I then told him I would consult a friend: I did so, and was advised to accept the offer. A few days after, I went with a farmer into his field. In a few minutes a colt, about two years and a half old, came to me, and put his nose upon my shoulder: I stroked him, and asked the farmer what he would take for him. He said, "Five pounds." We struck a bargain at once, and in a few days I mounted my horse, and have kept him to this day; which is about twenty-five years. On him I have travelled, comfortably, not less than a hundred thousand miles in preaching the Gospel. In this also I see the hand of God: for I parted with one horse, rather than bring a reproach on the Gospel; and, as a reward, He provided me such another as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of.

While I laboured in Devonshire, I met with some trials. As I was preaching out of doors on Christ-

mas-day, at South Molton, a gentleman's servant rushed through the crowd, and put a letter into my hand. On opening it at my lodgings, I found a string in it; and, after the writer had fully exerted himself in pouring out a flood of low abuse, he begged that I would do him the favour to hang myself in the string he had sent me. Some years after, the gentleman at whose house I lodged told me, that this same man was killed in a fray with his master. From hence I went to North Molton; and while I was preaching in a large Baptist meeting, a fellow of an infamous character came in, and made use of a great deal of abusive language: when I had done preaching, he and a large mob followed us through the streets, throwing whatever came first to hand. A few days after my return to Tiverton, a messenger came to let me know, that the fellow above-mentioned had got a warrant from the mayor, to make me pay for three oaths I had sworn in the pulpit. The first was, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God." The second, "He that believeth not shall be damned." And the third, "They that have done evil shall go to the resurrection of damnation." And for these I was to pay five shillings each; for though, while I was in the pulpit, he said, I was a mere vagabond, now I was to be brought to justice, he would treat me like a gentleman!

While I was at dinner one day at Collumpton, I was dreadfully tempted to believe that I was not called to preach. I then thought, "This food does not belong to me; and therefore I am a thief and a robber in eating it." I then burst into tears, and could eat no more. As I was to preach at one o'clock, I went to the preaching-house, weeping all the way. I

also went weeping into the pulpit, and wept sore while I gave out the hymn, when I was at prayer, and when I preached. The congregation was soon as deeply affected as I was myself, and many of them roared aloud for the disquietness of their souls; so that I have reason to believe, God brought much good out of that temptation.

From Devonshire I went into Cornwall, where I laboured hard: and though I cannot boast of abundant success, yet some were both convinced and converted.

As to trials, I do not remember that I had any in these parts, which deserve that name. Indeed, in one place the high constable came to press me for a soldier, while I was preaching. He said, "As you preach so well, you are very fit to serve His Majesty. I therefore desire you will get ready to go with me to a magistrate to-morrow morning." I answered, "Why not to-night? I am ready to go with you now." He then said, "Well! you may first finish your sermon." Accordingly, I began again where I had left off; and the constable and his companion stayed to hear me, and then went quietly away. The next morning I waited for his return; but he never came; so that in all probability what he heard was a means, at least, of cooling his courage.

While I was in this Circuit, I dreamed one night that Christ was come in the clouds to judge the world; and also that He looked exceeding black at me. When I awoke, I was much alarmed. I therefore humbled myself exceedingly, with fastings and prayer; and was determined never to give over, till my evidence of the love of Christ was made quite clear. One day, as I was at prayer in my room, with my eyes shut, the Lord, as it were, appeared to the eye

of my mind, as standing just before me, while ten thousand small streams of blood seemed to issue from every part of His body. This sight was so unexpected, and at the same time so seasonable, that, for once, I wept aloud; yea, and almost fainted away. I now more fully believed His love to me, and that, if He was then to come to judgment, He would not frown, but rather smile on me: therefore I loved and praised Him with all my heart.

Some years after, I had a dream of a quite different sort. I dreamed that I was talking with two women concerning the day of judgment. Among other things, I thought I told them, I was certain it was very near. On hearing this, I thought they burst into laughter, and rejected all I said. Being much grieved at this, I told them, "I will go and see if it is not as I have said." Accordingly, I went to the door, and, on looking up southward, thought I saw the heavens open, and a stream of fire, as large as a small river, issuing forth. On seeing this, I thought I ran back to the women, and said, "You would not believe me; but come to the door, and you will see with your own eyes, that the day is come." On hearing this, I thought they were much alarmed, and ran with me to the door. By the time we were got thither, I thought the whole concave, southward, was filled with an exceedingly thick, fiery mist, which swiftly moved northward, in a huge body, filling the whole space between the heavens and the earth as it came along. As it drew near, I thought, "The day is come, of which I have so often told the world: and now, in a few moments, I shall see how it will be with me to all eternity!" and for a moment I seemed to feel myself in a state of awful suspense. When the fire was come close to me, I was going to

shrink back ; but thought, "This is all in vain, as there is now no place of shelter left." I then pushed myself forward into it, and found that the fire had no power to hurt me ; for I stood as easy in the midst of it, as ever I did in the open air. The joy I felt, on being able to stand unhurt and undismayed amidst this awful burning, cannot be described. Even so shall it be with all who are careful to enter in at the strait gate, and to walk closely and steadily in the narrow way all the days of their life : all these shall

"Stand secure, and smile,
Amidst the jarring elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds !"

From Cornwall I was sent to Norwich. While I was here, I went one Sabbath-day to Yarmouth. As I went along, my companion every now and then cried out, "I shall be murdered and go to hell this day ; for I know not the Lord !" For the people of Yarmouth had often said, that "if any Methodist came there, he should never return alive." When we got to the town, we went to the church. I then went into the market-place, and gave out a hymn. While I sung and prayed, the multitude was tolerably quiet ; but as soon as I had taken my text, they began to be very rude. In a short time a friend pulled me down. After staying awhile at another friend's house, I sent for my horse : the mob followed him, and soon filled the alley where he was brought. As soon as I was mounted, he drove the mob before him ; but the women stood in their doors, some with both hands full of dirt, and others with bowls of water, which they threw at me as I passed by. When we got into the open street, we had such a shower

of stones, sticks, apples, turnips, potatoes, &c., as I never saw before or since. My fellow-traveller galloped out of the town as fast as he was able; but I watched the motions of the sticks and stones which were likely to hit me, so as to preserve a regular retreat. When I overtook my companion, we were thankful that we escaped with our lives; as were our friends in Norwich, on seeing us return.

My next remove was to London, where I continued till August. What service I was of here, I cannot tell; only I remember, that under a sermon I preached in the Foundry, that good man, and useful preacher, Mr. Joseph Guilford, was awakened.

At our Conference in 1756 I was appointed for Ireland. I spent the year in and about Limerick, Waterford, and Cork. In the first of these places, God was pleased to own my labours much. Many of the soldiers, as well as others, were converted to God.

At the next Conference I was again stationed for London. In my way thither, I stopped at Whitehaven. Here I was greatly tried, from a particular quarter; but I was more than conqueror, through Him who had loved me; and was frequently refreshed in my soul, and, in some measure, blessed in my labours.

From Whitehaven I went to Leeds, where the people detained me about six weeks. All that time I was very much followed; yet I cannot say, that the word was more, if so much blessed, as it had been in many other places. At last I reached London; but my Leeds friends wrote to Mr. Wesley, to send me back. When he proposed it to me, I consented. But as I was appointed to do several things which were very disagreeable to some in power, this lost me

many of my kindest friends, and was a source of great uneasiness to me for many years.

From my first awakening, I was almost singular in my notions of marriage. I thought that young people did not consult reason, and the will of God, so much as their own foolish inclinations. When I mentioned these things to my young acquaintance, they thought my notions were romantic and chimerical. However, I determined, if ever I married, to act according to the rules I had so often laid down for others. My first inquiry, therefore, was, "Am I called to marry at this time?" Here I weighed the reasons on both sides, and then concluded in the affirmative. I then inquired, "What sort of a person ought I to marry?" To this I answered in general, "To such a one as Christ would choose for me, suppose He was on earth, and was to undertake that business." I then asked, "But what sort of a person have I reason to believe He would choose for me?" Here I fixed on the following properties, and ranged them in the following order; placing that first, which I judged to be of most value in the sight of God; and that last, which I thought of smallest importance. The first was grace. I was quite certain, that no preacher of God's word ought, on any consideration, to marry one who is not eminently gracious. The second, that she ought to have tolerably good common sense. A Methodist preacher in particular, who travels into all parts, and sees such a variety of company, I believed, ought not to take a fool with him. Thirdly, as I knew the natural warmth of my own temper, I concluded that a wise and gracious God would not choose a companion for me who would throw oil, but rather water, upon the fire. Fourthly, I judged that, as I was connected with a

poor people, the will of God was, that whoever I married should have a small competency, to prevent my making the Gospel chargeable to any.

Having proceeded thus far, my next inquiry was, "But who is the person in whom these properties are thus found in the most eminent degree?" I immediately turned my eyes to Miss Green, a person of a good family, and noted through all the north of England for her extraordinary piety. I therefore opened my mind to her; and, after consulting Mr. Wesley, we were married. As in this affair I consulted reason and the will of God so impartially, I have had abundant reason to be thankful ever since.

As soon as I was married, I went into Lancashire, where I laboured about a year. The greatest outward trial I had here was the decay of my health. Sometimes I was so ill, that when I left one place to go to another, the people took a final farewell of me, as not expecting me to live to come round again at the end of three weeks or a month. However, I kept my Circuit in general, which included a great part of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire; and daily did therein the whole work of a healthy man. But though I have not much to say concerning my usefulness this year, yet some were awakened and brought to God, who stand to this day.

From hence I went into the York Circuit, in 1760. At that time I was thought to be near the last stage of a consumption. And, as I had about three hundred miles to ride every six weeks, and about sixty societies to take care of, few thought I should be able to go once round. But I said, "I am determined to go as far as I can; and when I can go no further, I will turn back." Accordingly, I entered upon my work, which was enough to try the strongest consti-

tution. By the time I had got about half way round, I found that violent labour got me a little appetite, yea, and caused me to sleep better; so that I began to gather flesh before I got to the end of my Circuit. But my recovery was exceedingly gradual; for as I had been declining from the time I had the small-pox, which was about eight years, so I was about twelve more before I was quite recovered.

My next remove was to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here I had many mercies and comforts, and a few trials. In one place I was obliged to put thirty-five members out of the society; and if I had not laboured hard, and exercised great patience, we should have lost about two hundred in that one place. But though I had the express order of Mr. Wesley for what I did, and acted with great integrity on the one hand, and tenderness on the other, I lost many of my dearest friends, who from that time became my bitterest enemies. But I must say (in honour of the grace of God) that friends and enemies have always been alike to me, when I thought the glory of God was concerned.

From Newcastle I went home to Leeds, where I laboured a whole year. But as several persons still retained their old prejudices against me, my labour here was now rather uncomfortable. However, though I cannot say I was of any great service this year, yet I had some fruit in several places.

The year following I was stationed in Bristol. I believe I was never so likely to do good as at this time; but I was removed, and spent the remainder of the year in Leeds. In 1760 I buried my first child here; and this year I buried the other. The next year I spent in London and Colchester. In the last of these places we enjoyed great poverty and

great peace, and had many comfortable opportunities of waiting on God, both in public and private. In London I had friends and enemies, comforts and trials ; but the greatest trial of all was, the hardness of my deceitful heart, which I sometimes felt in an eminent degree.

At the Manchester Conference I was appointed for Scotland. The two years I tarried here I spent in and about Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. While I was in Edinburgh, I was remarkably earnest in private prayer one night. The next morning I awoke about four o'clock, and said to myself, "I will lie here no longer, but rise and call upon God." In an instant I was filled with such sweetness, as I had not tasted for a long time. I hastened to put on my clothes, and fell on my knees before God ; and, with tears of gratitude, thanked Him with my whole heart. The effect of this visitation lasted a considerable time, and was of great use to me, both in preaching and living. Some time after, as I was preaching on the barren fig-tree, a few words proceeded from me in such a manner as I can scarcely describe. The congregation seemed as if they had been electrified. One who had long been bowed down cried out amain ; and said afterwards, that under those words she felt as if she was just dropping into hell ! I have since thought that if the word was always attended with such power, very few would stand before it. While I was in this Circuit, I spent two or three nights in Glasgow ; and one person, at least, was converted to God in that time. As to Aberdeen, I can only say, my labours were often comfortable to myself. What use they were of to others will be fully known in due time.

While I was here, I found out that Dr. Memis

was the person who; under God, saved my life many years ago, when I was ill at Wrexham. When I first went to his house, we remembered nothing of each other. However, in conversing about our travels, and on comparing circumstances together, I found that he was the person to whom I owed so much. On this discovery, I felt great love to my old benefactor; but the doctor himself was not able to recollect anything of the affair. O, how many right actions which God's people have wrought are now forgotten of them, which, nevertheless, are noted in His book, and shall be brought to light in that day when He "shall reward every man according to his works!"

In Dundee I laboured comfortably, among a poor, quiet, earnest, and happy people. Here I fell into intimate acquaintance with Mr. T., minister of one of the churches in that town. Our friendly interviews, our Christian conversations, our free and candid debates, together with the kind treatment I almost daily received at his house, I shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude. Nor shall I ever forget the last sermon I preached in that town: such liberty I never felt before or since. I had such an absolute command of my ideas, language, voice, and gesture, that I could say what I would, and also in what manner I pleased! What good, if any, was then done, I know not now, but shall know another day.

From Scotland I went over to Dublin. Here the Lord began to bless my labours almost as soon as I arrived. In a very few weeks a considerable number were awakened, and others received a sense of the favour of God. But my fellow-labourer and I were grieved to see so much levity among many of our

friends, and determined to oppose it. Accordingly, we preached against it with all our might. We determined also to show, by our example, how Christians ought to be serious, and to take up their cross daily. But J. M. opposed us, by softening the awful truths we delivered : this was very agreeable to the delicate part of our hearers. At last I spoke my mind very freely : the consequence was, he and his friends rose up against me, and quite bore me down.

The next year I came over to Chester, where I was stationed for a year. From hence I went to pay a visit to my own country ; and preached in Montgomery, Newtown, Llanidloes, and many other places. In Tregonan, where I was born, I preached once, and had most of the village to hear me. But when Mr. B—n—y, who owned most of the parish, heard of it, he told my uncle, who with my grandfather had lived in that house nearly a hundred years, that if he encouraged me to preach in the village, he would turn him out immediately : he also sent a servant to a cousin of mine, who lived in another parish, and told her the same.

When I came to Fordon, the place where I was brought up, I fell in company with the minister, who took me to his house. He said, “I hear you intend to preach in this parish.” I told him, “I do ; yea, and think it my duty so to do.” He then intimated, that I should be punished if I did. I said, “I am licensed, and therefore will not be hindered by any man in the parish ; no, nor by the primate of all England.” He then spoke of the Divine right, which was found only in the established clergy of this land. I answered, “The world, sir, is large, of which England is but a very small part,—an island only, stuck up, as it were, in one corner of it ! And

as to its established clergy, you know, sir, that many of them are worldly-minded to a proverb; yea, that multitudes of them are drunkards, swearers, pleasure-takers, &c.: and yet you tell me, that such a clergy, of so inconsiderable a corner of the world, are the only ministers of God; and that all others are intruders and deceivers." To this he made no answer: so we parted as we met. In a few days I preached in the house of one of Mr. Tudor's daughters; and, I believe, to the satisfaction of most who heard me.

Soon after I returned to Chester my wife was taken ill of a fever. For eight weeks the physician told me every day that there was no hope of her recovery; and she thought herself, for many weeks, that every day would be her last. But this was so far from being matter of sorrow to her, that she rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon at her Father's house; and told me frequently, that she had much rather die than live: and though, from beginning to end, she was ill fifteen weeks, in all that time I never heard her once complain about the state of her soul. By this sickness I was more clearly convinced of the necessity, not only of faith, but also of a good conscience. Faith, I saw, as a hand, lays hold on Christ; and a good conscience confirms that hold. Hence my wife, who had for so many years kept a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, now lay as on the brink of eternity, quiet and unmoved, like a ship at anchor in the mouth of a harbour, without one blast of wind to disturb her peace. On the other hand, I saw that an evil conscience causes faith first to weaken its grasp, and then to unloose its hold. Thus it is, that in an hour of trial so many make shipwreck of faith, and are filled

with doubt and fear ; because, by their loose walking, they have put away a good conscience.

The next year I went to Liverpool. Here I enjoyed many mercies and comforts ; but I cannot say much of my usefulness. Indeed, one evening, just as I was going into the pulpit at a village about eight miles out of Liverpool, I was seized with a great spitting of blood. However, as I did not know where it might end, I was determined, if possible, to say something for God once more. Accordingly, I began, and delivered a few sentences, and then spit out a large quantity of blood ; and so I went on for about half an hour. I then, in the best manner I could, commended myself and the people unto God. And as I did not judge it safe to stay that night in a village where help could not be had in case of extreme necessity, I took my horse, and returned to Liverpool. Shortly after I heard that one of the most abandoned and noted sinners in those parts was awakened that night. This made a great noise far and near, and was a means of stopping the mouths of many gainsayers, and perhaps of saving some souls from death. On receiving this account, all within me cried out,

“ My life, my blood, I here present,
If for Thy cause they may be spent :
Fulfil Thy sovereign pleasure, Lord !
Thy will be done, Thy name adored.”

From Liverpool I went to the London Conference, and was appointed for the Derby Circuit. But before I left London, I fell into great dejection of spirit, and was for many weeks on the brink of despair. But I cried unto God night and day ; and, in due time, He showed me the light of His countenance once more : for which I hope to praise Him to

all eternity. I have also great occasion to be thankful to His people, who sympathized with me, and encouraged me on every side. When my soul was again revived, I went into my Circuit, and was kindly received. Here I continued for two years, among a loving, happy people; and I have some reason to believe that my labours here were not altogether in vain. From hence I came once more to London, where I continued two years. In the first of these, Mr. Toplady paid me a visit at the Foundry, and stayed about three hours. We soon entered on a debate about our different sentiments; which we carried on, from first to last, without one unkind or uncivil expression. I mentioned several reasons why I could not be a predestinarian; and as I am still of the same mind, I shall here repeat the substance of them, as some of my present objections to that hypothesis.

The first principle of predestination, I said, is, that "God's sovereignty is, in every sense, absolute and unlimited." Now, I undertake to demonstrate that, in some sense, it is not so. For instance: it is certain that though it is not limited by anything without Him, His other attributes, such as His wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love, limit it on every side. Hence it is, that though He is a Sovereign, yet it is impossible that He should be either an unwise, unholy, unjust, untrue, or an unloving Sovereign; which would absolutely be the case, if, by His mere sovereignty, He had decreed sin, reprobation, &c.

The next fundamental of predestination is, that "God, as a mere and an unlimited Sovereign, has decreed whatsoever comes to pass." Now, as idolatry, blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, murder, adultery, &c.,

come to pass, according to this principle of predestination, God has decreed them. And as it is certain that all these are forbidden in His word, it follows, according to this hypothesis, that He has absolutely decreed and expressly forbidden the same things. Now, before I can receive the hypothesis which supposes this, I must clearly see how it is consistent with the wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love of God to do this.

Thirdly, because the absolute sovereignty of God has thus decreed everything, predestination represents mankind as not having any of their actions or volitions in their own power, but as being acted upon like mere machines. But God, by giving them instructions, commands, promises, and threatenings, treats them as if they were free and voluntary agents. Now, before I can be a predestinarian, I must see how it agrees with the aforesaid attributes of God, for His sovereignty to decree, that men should be created involuntary beings, and then to deal with them as if they were free.

As Mr. Toplady did not offer any solid answer to these reasonings, I told him, that, as an honest man, I could not be of his opinion, till these difficulties were fully removed. We then parted, as good friends, at least, as we met; and I was told after that he spoke well of me in several places; but, in his next publication, I was almost all that is bad!

The next year I went with Mr. Wesley to visit my friends in Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. This was a very agreeable journey; and I hope it was a profitable one to my old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for many years. After this, I spent a year in visiting my friends in various parts of the kingdom; and, I believe, this labour of love was not

in vain. The Conference following, I undertook the care of Mr. Wesley's printing. From that time I have been in London; and between preaching, and writing, and the care of the press, I never laboured harder in all my life. But I find labour good both for body and soul; and therefore I hope to be fully employed as long as I live.

Upon the whole, when I consider how the providence of God provided for me in my infancy, brought me up to the state of man, preserved me from those evils which brought others to an untimely end, directed my wandering steps to the means of my conversion, cast my lot among His people, called me to preach His word, owned my preaching to the conversion of others, stood by me in many trials, brought me back so often from the brink of the grave, healed my manifold backslidings, provided me a suitable companion, and put me in possession of all the necessities of life; when I consider these things, I must say, "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

For several years Mr. Olivers sustained what he denominates "the care of Mr. Wesley's printing." Mr. Wesley himself selected the matter for "The Arminian Magazine," and committed it to Mr. Olivers for publication. In this office he did not appear to advantage; and indeed he entered upon it too late in life to afford reasonable hope of success. Having been long accustomed to read merely for the purpose of catching the sense of the authors whom he deemed it requisite to consult, it could hardly be expected that

he would readily acquire the habit of that minute attention, not only to words, but also to letters and points, which is necessary to insure typographical accuracy. The mistakes which appeared in the successive numbers of his Magazine were, to the correct mind of Mr. Wesley, a perpetual source of vexation. In many instances, they presented a complete perversion of the sense, even when subjects of importance were under discussion. He himself prepared, for several of the volumes, a frightful list of errata, which he published for the benefit of the subscribers. Mr. Olivers also occasionally inserted articles on his own responsibility, of which Mr. Wesley did not approve. It is not therefore surprising that the following entry appears in Mr. Wesley's Journal, under the date of August 9th, 1789:—"I settled all my temporal business, and, in particular, chose a new person to prepare the Arminian Magazine; being obliged, however unwillingly, to drop Mr. O——, for only these two reasons: 1. The errata are unsufferable. I have borne them for these twelve years, but can bear them no longer. 2. Several pieces are inserted without my knowledge, both in prose and verse. I must try whether these things cannot be amended for the short residue of my life."

Mr. Olivers continued his residence in London, where he exercised his ministry, as the infirmities of age permitted, till March, 1799, when he died somewhat suddenly, and his remains were deposited in Mr. Wesley's tomb, behind the City-Road chapel.

Mr. Olivers was a man of very strong mind, and of varied talents. As a preacher, he was argumentative, energetic, zealous, and successful, especially during the period of his itinerancy. He had thoroughly studied the Calvinistic controversy, and wrote several

tracts upon that subject, which display considerable force of argument, and logical skill. He defended his own creed, and the character of Mr. Wesley, with power and success against the rude and abusive assaults of Mr. Toplady, and of Messrs. Richard and Rowland Hill, by both of whom he was treated with unchristian contumely. His prose compositions possess great merit. They are simple, perspicuous, energetic, and generally correct. Nor did he less excel in sacred verse. His fine hymn to the God of Abraham, adapted to a celebrated air sung by Leoni in the Jews' synagogue, had reached the thirtieth edition in the year 1779. He also wrote a hymn on the last judgment, consisting of several stanzas, which he set to music himself, and the twentieth edition of which was published at the period just mentioned. His "Hymn of Praise to Christ" was set to music by a gentleman in Ireland, and performed before the Bishop of Waterford in his cathedral on Christmas-day. To this was annexed a hymn on Matthew v. 29, 30. It should also be stated, that the fine tune entitled "Helmsley," adapted to the hymn beginning,

"Lo! He comes with clouds descending,"

and contained in Mr. Wesley's "Sacred Harmony," was composed by Mr. Olivers. As a writer of hymns he was no imitator. His strains of thought, and his versification, are equally original.

Mr. Olivers's talents secured for him a high degree of respect. Mr. Wesley pronounced him to be a "full match" for the Rev. Augustus Toplady; and when Sir Richard Hill spoke of him in language of contempt, as "one Thomas Oliver, alias Olivers," Mr. Fletcher said, "This author was, twenty-five

years ago, a mechanic, and, like 'one' Peter, 'alias' Simon, a fisherman, and like 'one' Saul, 'alias' Paul, a tent-maker, has had the honour of being promoted to the dignity of a preacher of the Gospel; and his talents as a writer, a logician, a poet, and a composer of sacred music, are known to those who have looked into his publications." The Conference also state, that "in his younger days he was a zealous, able, and useful travelling preacher. His talents were very considerable; and his attachment to Mr. Wesley, and the cause of Methodism, was fully evidenced by several masterly publications."

Mr. Olivers appears to have been distinguished by great firmness and resolution. When Mr. Shirley and some other Calvinist ministers came to the Conference of 1771, which was held in Bristol, for the purpose of obtaining some modification of the Minutes of the preceding year, and Mr. Wesley, with his preachers in general, agreed to sign a paper which was presented to them for that purpose, Mr. Olivers declared his dissent from the whole affair, and warned his friends that an ill use would be made of their unsuspecting candour. His remonstrances were disregarded at the time; but his friends afterwards found that his apprehensions were unhappily well founded. The following introductory paragraphs to his "Scourge to Calumny, inscribed to Richard Hill, Esq.," will show his manner of writing, and the kind of treatment which he met with:—

"HONOURED SIR,—On Monday, February 15th, I attended the evening prayers at St. Paul's. The psalm for the day was the seventy-eighth. The sublime description of God's power and glory there given, as displayed in behalf of His people through

all generations, greatly affected me. I was also much affected at the account the royal penman gave of himself. 'He chose David also His servant,' said he, 'and took him away from the sheepfolds. As he was following the ewes great with young ones, He took him, that he might feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance.'

"In this account I scarcely knew which to admire most,—the providence of God in raising a shepherd's boy to the dignity of so great a monarch; or the piety of this renowned people in not rejecting and despising him; or his own amazing humility, at a time when he had reached the very summit of worldly glory, in transmitting to future ages such an explicit account of his mean original. On these reflections, all within me cried out, 'Lord, shall I, shall any servant of Thine, after this, be ashamed of an humble birth, or of a mean employment? Forbid it, gracious God!'

"As I returned home, I called at Mr. Dilly's, for your 'Farrago Double-distilled;' and on reading therein the contempt cast on my insignificant name, I adored the kind Providence which brought me so seasonably under the sound of such a Scripture, and which impressed it so deeply on my heart.

"But permit me to ask, sir, by what laws you are authorized to insult a person who never injured you? Not by the laws of God; not by the precepts of Christianity. For these teach you, not to 'render evil for evil, or railing.' But your conduct, sir, has been the reverse of this; for you have rendered evil to one of whom you cannot say that he has injured you so much as in thought. You have railed on him while he was 'dumb, and opened not his mouth.' You know, sir, who hath said, 'Whatsoever ye would

that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.' Now, have you done this in the present case? Consider, honoured sir, have you, in mentioning my name, been as careful not to load it with public contempt, as you would that I should be in mentioning yours?

"Perhaps you will wonder that I animadvert so freely on the conduct of a person of your consequence, in making any use of my name which you think proper. But permit me to tell you, sir, that my name is as sacred to me, as yours is to you. And permit me to tell you farther, that if the inequality which subsists between us was a thousand times greater than it is, you would have no more right to insult me, than I should have to insult you. And permit me to tell you once more, that if you were the greatest peer of the realm, and I the poorest peasant, the laws of God and of my country would authorize me to call you to an account, for every insult offered to my character, either as a fellow-creature, or as an Englishman.

"As to that reputation which arises from an honourable birth, an early education, a plentiful fortune, and a respectable employment, you are rich: you have flocks and herds in great abundance. But as for me, if I possess one scrap of credit in the world, it is only as a single lamb, bought with my own industry, nursed at my own expense, and with much toil and patience; and which, after all, is so small and feeble, that it can scarce be seen or heard among all the mighty flocks which adorn your ample plains.

"Now, sir, what was the reason that you, a man of such abundance, should endeavour to rob me of my little all?"

Mr. Olivers's affection for his father and friend

Mr. Wesley was strong and uninterrupted. He not only defended the character of that eminent man against the slanderous attacks of the Messrs. Hill and Toplady, but also against those of the Rev. Caleb Evans. When Mr. Wesley died, Mr. Olivers poured out the sorrows of his heart in an elegy of considerable length, and of great pathos. It seems to have emanated from the fulness of his heart before Mr. Wesley's interment, and while thousands of people were crowding to view his remains in the City-Road chapel. We here reprint this scarce tract, in the belief that it will not be unacceptable to the reader.

A DESCRIPTIVE AND PLAINTIVE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BY THOMAS OLIVERS.

"Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight."

Milton. 1791.

SILENCE, ye Storms ! nor softest Zephyrs blow,
To dissipate the gloom which reigns below :
But deepest Shades of Night, your darkest horror shed,
And aid my pensive Muse to mourn the silent dead.

But chiefly THOU, great Healer of mankind,
Whose only balm can heal the troubled mind,
Support my sinking head, and all my pains control,
While I rehearse aloud the sorrows of my soul.

The man I loved, the man by thousands prized,
By angels honour'd, but by fools despised,
Hath closed his eyes in death, and left me here in pain,
To sigh, and mourn, and weep, while life and love remain.

O Tale of Woe ! expand thy ebony wings,
And fly to palaces, to courts and kings :
Then swiftly mount aloft, and sound from shore to shore,
Thy Friend and Father fled, thy WESLEY is no more !

The Tale is gone ! it mourns along the plain ;
 The uplands sadden, and the hills complain !
 The woods and shady groves assume a darker shade,
 While sighs and sadness reign in every pensive glade.

As on the hills the watchful Shepherd stands,
 He hears the Tale below, and lifts his hands ;
 Then sighs, and smites his breast, and drowns his path with tears,
 And to his lonely cot the mournful tidings bears.

The hardy Hind, who turns his furrows o'er,
 Goes on and weeps, till he can weep no more ;
 Then quits his callous hold, and leaves his team behind,
 While he in rustic strains relieves his troubled mind.

The hoary Sire, with cares and years oppress'd,
 Leans on his staff, and smites his aged breast ;
 Then homeward bends his way, and strives to mend his pace,
 To spread the mournful Tale through all his natal place.

The Virgin-train, who grace the rural throng,
 Nor lead the village dance, nor aid the song,
 Nor bloom like Sharon's rose, nor hail the welcome spring,
 But with loud cries and woes make all their hamlets ring.

The youthful Swains are now no longer seen
 To play their gambols o'er the neighbouring green ;
 Their mirth is sadly changed to solitary woe,
 While through the lonely glades and villages they go.

Nor rural Nymphs, nor rustic Swains alone,
 But all our towns and streets partake our moan :
 They swell our deepest groans, and echo back our cries,
 And mix their tears with ours, and urge them through the skies.

Ev'n Cits and gay Coquets, unused to weep,
 Show signs of sorrow as they crowd the street ;
 They turn, and change their course, and throng the neighb'ring road,*
 To view his last remains in his forlorn abode.

They see his last remains, and bless the sight,
 And own the things he taught must needs be right :
 They bow, and inly pray they may his steps pursue,
 And vow while life remains to keep his end in view.

* This is literally true.

The men of rank and fame their loss deplore,
 And wish the season back, which comes no more :
 " Could we, alas," they cry, " his shining path pursue,
 We should be great indeed, and blest and happy too ! "

Fair Science now puts on her sad attire,
 And from the studious groves her sons retire ;
 They kiss his learned toil, and bow their pensive head,
 And mourn such wisdom lost among the common dead.

Nor Foes (for foes he had !) can now forbear
 To loathe their own, while they his deeds declare :
 For all the good he did they now at least descry,
 And fain like him would live, and wish like him to die.

Nor Envy now no more reluctant seems
 To own the worth she in her heart esteems ;
 But calls him great and good, and truly learn'd and wise,
 And spreads his fame abroad to all in earth and skies.

Pale Indigence draws near, with all her train :
 She looks, and looks again, but all in vain !
 Then weeps and cries aloud, and all her grief relates,
 And spreads ten thousand tears around his sacred gates.

As home she goes, but goes without supplies,
 " Where is the good man gone ? " the Orphan cries :
 " I know he 's not at home, or we had better sped ;
 But sure as he returns, we shall again be fed. "

The Mother hears, then tears her squalid hair,
 Looks wild and raves, and yields to black despair ;
 Then vents her mightiest woe in many a doleful cry,
 And bears her orphan off to pine, and weep, and die !

With pensive ears he heard the Aged moan,
 And saw their tears, and mix'd them with his own ;
 Then stretch'd his liberal hand, and shared his frugal store,
 And gave them all he could, and wish'd to give them more.

The Vagrant Poor, suspected and despised,
 Were oft relieved by him, and sometimes prized ;
 And though the boon was small, he gave with such a grace,
 As spread confusion o'er their feign'd and harden'd face.

When he had nought, and could no longer give,
He cried aloud, and BEGG'D the poor might live;
Nor would he cease to beg, till he his suit obtain'd,
Though niggards stopp'd their ears, and all his cries disdain'd.

But those of worth, who bear the sacred cross,
Revere his labours, and lament the loss
Of one who taught and urged, like those renown'd of old,
To share among the poor their hoards of useless gold.

But deeper woes distract my tortured mind;
They come from every coast with every wind:
His children mourn aloud, nor can they e'er refrain,
While aught of filial love or gratitude remain.

"Ah me," they cry, "and is our father fled?
And is he number'd with the silent dead?
And is he gone at last to that celestial shore?
And shall our wishful eyes behold him here no more!"

O mighty woe! O loss beyond redress!
Kind Heaven, assist, while we our woes express!
Our drooping head lift up, and loose our stammering tongue,
While we proclaim abroad what he for us hath done.

When wandering wide, and o'er the mountains spread,
Like sheep without a shepherd at their head,
He kindly sought us out, and in his arms embraced,
And banish'd all our griefs, and all our fears effaced.

When dangers press'd, or foes appear'd in sight,
He stood between, and put them all to flight;
Then led us safely on, and show'd our feet the way
To peace, and hope, and love, and everlasting day.

When grief assail'd, he heard our every moan,
Wept when we wept, and made our griefs his own;
Nor would he cease to grieve while we of aught complain'd;
But strove to bear us up till we our joy regain'd.

In all our joys he gladly bore a part,
And met our transports with a bounding heart;
Then look'd around on all with smiles of softest grace,
And bless'd our happy lot, and kiss'd our blushing face.

When songs of heavenly praise employ'd our tongues,
 He join'd with heart and voice to aid our songs :
 To guide and guard our strains, he waved his hands on high,
 Lest one discordant note pass'd uncorrected by.

If e'er our lukewarm souls grew cold and dead,
 And all his mild reproofs flew o'er our head,
 He changed his softer notes, and look'd with sterner brow,
 And fain would use the rod ; but, O, he knew not how !

When feuds and contests rose to wound our peace,
 His prudence soon prevail'd to make them cease.
 He heard our sad complaints ; then look'd, and sweetly smiled :
 We blush'd, and then shook hands, and so were reconciled.

Beset on every side with worldly cares,
 He warn'd us night and day with many tears,
 To shun the dangerous road, where twice ten thousand fell,
 Who barter'd grace for gold, and now lament in hell.

If young or old appear'd in costly dress,
 He blamed us o'er and o'er for such excess.
 " Be plain and neat," he cried, " and frugal of your store,
 Nor dare to rob your God by robbing of the poor."

Whene'er we stray'd, by sin and error led,
 He sought, and found us out, wherever fled ;
 Then kindly call'd us back, and spread his arms abroad,
 To help our weakness home to happiness and God.

That we no more might stray, or lag behind,
 Our faithful shepherd bore us on his mind ;
 He watch'd, and wept, and warn'd, when sin appear'd in view,
 Lest greater ills o'ertook than all we ever knew.

" Be wise," he cried, " and shun the paths of sin ;
 Be bold, be firm, nor let the foe break in ;
 March on with cheerful feet, and sing your choicest song ;
 Nor fear your labour lost, nor think your journey long.

" While those who know you not for forms contend,
 Be faith and hope your guide, and love your end ;
 Let these direct your feet, and raise your heads on high,
 Where faith and hope shall cease, and love shall never die.

" Yet while you here remain, your load to bear,
Let works of righteousness your faith declare ;
Be just and kind to those who all your good despise,
And show to all around your sonship in the skies.

" But chiefly those who love the Saviour's name,
Who prize His scandal, and enjoy His shame ;
To each of these extend your arms of love abroad,
And serve and love them well, and only less than God.

" And as you pass through life's uneven way,
Pray for your guides, and without ceasing pray ;
Support our feeble hands, when to the mount we go,
And thus reward our toil, and thus your kindness show.

" O grant this only boon ! 'tis all we crave,
That we in helping you ourselves may save ;
That we may faithful prove, and to the end endure,
To wear the crown of righteousness our conquest sure.

" As life so soon is o'er, your time redeem,
And give your hearts to God, and live to Him :
Then wait in patient hope your summons to the skies,
Where pain and grief are o'er, and death for ever dies."

'Twas thus our faithful guide his course pursued,
Nor toil nor danger shunn'd to do us good ;
But gladly bore the cross, that we the prize might gain,
And one with him and God in endless ages reign.

Nor was his toil and care to us confined ;
He daily sought the good of all mankind ;
That they might seek and know, in this their gracious day,
The way to endless peace, and cast their sins away.

He wish'd that all might find their pardon seal'd,
Their fears removed, and feel their conscience heal'd ;
That peace, and joy, and hope, might here their portion be,
And love, and sweet delight, to all eternity.

For this his cheerful feet pursued their way,
Through winter's nights, and summer's sultry day ;
Through woods and floods he pass'd, and o'er the boist'rous main,
Ner e'er was known to shrink, or of his toil complain.

While o'er the mountain-tops he often went,
 He met the rapid storms with sweet content ;
 Then swiftly moved along the dark and doubtful track,
 And chid his coward steed, who fain would turn his back.*

He often rode, as through the land he pass'd,
 Full thirty miles before he broke his fast ;
 Then added thirty more before he stopp'd to dine ;
 And ten or twenty more before his preaching-time.†

When worn with toil, and age, and long disease,
 He rode an easier way, his friends to please ;
 But neither friends nor age his wonted speed could stay,
 For now he often went his hundred miles a day.‡

To live for God, while in this vale of tears,
 He rose at four o'clock for threescore years ; §
 Then spent the live-long day in something great and good ;
 Nor lounged one hour away, nor ever ling'ring stood.

When he in youthful days his course begun,
 And rose resplendent like the rising sun,
 Both earth and hell pursued, and waged a dreadful fight,
 To blast the opening bloom, and quench the kindling light.

For this the rich and great their influence spread,
 And sleeping shepherds raised their drowsy head ;
 While formal saints exclaim'd, where'er he show'd his face,
 And Scandal croak'd around her false and foul disgrace.

By these the human herds were gather'd round,
 And sought with sticks and stones, or aught they found ;
 Who tore his raiment off, and bruised his sacred head, ||
 Nor could they scarce refrain before they thought him dead.

Through tumults, toils, and strife, he urged his way,
 And dared the ills of life his feet to stay ;
 The ills he saw and felt but raised his bosom higher,
 And kinder pity gave, and more intense desire.

As truth is great, and will in time prevail,
 His foes fell off, and would no more assail ;
 But turn'd their hate to love, and own'd the truth he taught,
 And bless'd the happy day which such glad tidings brought.

* Strictly true. † This is a real fact. ‡ This is a real fact.

§ This is a well-known fact. || This is another undoubted fact.

Now thousands turn'd, and twice ten thousand more,
And mourn'd the hated deeds they did before;
Then half the wond'ring world their gratitude express'd,
And threw their arms abroad, and clasp'd him to their breast.

Yet still he onward went, with steady pace,
As much unmoved by smiles as by disgrace;
Nor would he aught abate, though oft besought with tears,
But kept one even pace for MORE THAN THREESCORE YEARS.*

That this is no romance, one instance hear,
And may it rend in twain each sluggard's ear!
His last day's work but one he plann'd, and thought to ride
A HUNDRED MILES AND EIGHT, and preach and write beside.†

To feed his flock he put forth all his might,
And preach'd the word both morning, noon, and night;
Nor did he ever cease, while we had time to hear,
But preach'd, or someways taught, A THOUSAND TIMES A YEAR.‡

Besides the rest, which we assert as facts,
He wrote in all above two hundred tracts;
And yet, in every year, a thousand missives sent
Through this and various isles, and every continent.§

'Twas thus his years, and days, and hours were spent;
And thus he used the goods his Master lent;
'Twas thus,—we say no more, but this great truth rehearse,
He did what man could do to bless the universe.

At last the mortal foe his dart prepared;
We saw and wept, and each his grief declared;
Then tried each fruitless means to shield his sacred head;
Nor would we cease to try when all our hopes were fled.

But he, unmoved, beheld his end draw nigh,
And met the coming foe without a sigh;
Then raised his feeble voice, though with a falt'ring tongue,
And spread his arms abroad, and thus divinely sung:—

“All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored;
O Jesus! exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord:

* This is strictly, literally true.

† This is a real fact.

‡ This is another fact.

§ Another fact.

Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,
 Didst stoop to redeem a lost race ;
 Once more to Thy people return,
 And reign in Thy kingdom of grace.

“ O, wouldst Thou again be made known,
 Again in Thy Spirit descend,
 And set up in each of Thine own
 A kingdom that never shall end !
 Thou only art able to bless,
 And make the glad nations obey,
 And bid the dire enmity cease,
 And bow the whole world to Thy sway.”

When he was quite deranged, or slumb’ring laid,
 No wild or vagrant thought his tongue betray’d ;
 But what he said before, he said it now again,
 And still forgot his own to ease his brother’s pain.

As those stood weeping by, who raised his head,
 And did what could be done around his bed,
 He saw their toil and care, and thank’d their great good-will,
 And cried, “ ’Tis best of all, that God is with us still.”

That “ God is with us still ” he thrice declared,
 And thrice look’d up, and saw his vast reward ;
 Then cried, “ Through Jesu’s blood the holiest place I gain ; ”
 And strove to raise his voice, and sung his fav’rite strain :

“ I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath ;
 And when my voice is lost in death,
 Praise shall employ my nobler powers :
 My days of praise shall ne’er be past
 While life, and thought, and being last,
 Or immortality endures.

“ Happy the man whose hopes rely
 On Israel’s God ; He made the sky,
 And earth, and seas, with all their train :
 His truth for ever stands secure ;
 He saves the’ oppress’d, He feeds the poor,
 And none shall find His promise vain.”

The night for ever fled, the morn appear'd,
Which brought the signs of woe we long had fear'd.
He hail'd the happy day, and then triumphant cried,
"I'll praise!—I'll praise!—Farewell!" then closed his eyes, and
died.

O ruthless Death! how fix'd thy stern decree,
Since he must fall a sacrifice to thee!
Since him we valued most, as best of all our race,
Could not exemption find, or gain a longer space.

O, cheerless light! O, inauspicious day!
Which mock'd our fears, and bore our guide away;
And left us wand'ring here, with thousand cares oppress'd,
Without his wonted aid to ease our troubled breast.

The pensive dove, whene'er her mate is fled,
Coos round and round, then droops her languid head;
And shall not we complain, who feel a heavier load?
We must; we can't refrain while in this dark abode.

As Isr'el mourn'd of old, his fav'rite gone;
And Rachel mourn'd her fertile plains along;
As Mary mourn'd and wept beneath her Saviour's cross;
So we, with moans and tears, will now lament our loss.

But though we now lament, the day is nigh
When we shall meet again above the sky;
And there our songs unite, and join the radiant throng,
And bow before the throne, and bless the Great Three One!

Then let us still maintain the truth he taught,
And faithful prove in deed, and word, and thought:
The path he trod before, let us through life pursue,
And help each other on, and keep the prize in view.

But chiefly we, who bear the sacred shame,
Who feed the flock, and still revere his name;
Let us unite in one, and strive with mutual care
To help his children on, and all their burdens bear.

For this let us, like him, the world disdain;
For this, like him, rejoice in toil and pain;
Like him, be bold for God; like him, our time redeem;
And strive, and watch, and pray; and live and die like him.

We consider that without these elegiac stanzas the "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers" would be incomplete. It would not, indeed, be difficult for an accurate scholarship to discover in them literary blemishes; but they display throughout that high estimate of Mr. Wesley's character, talents, labours, and usefulness, and that tender affection for his person, which distinguished the men whom he associated with himself in evangelical labour. They admired and loved him, and evidently felt their connexion with him to be not only an honour, but also a high privilege; so that when he was taken from them, they wept like a family of orphans at the grave of their only surviving parent.

The following is a list of Mr. Olivers's publications, several of which are well worthy of being reprinted:—

I. A Hymn on the Last Judgment, set to Music by the Author.

II. A Hymn of Praise to Christ, set to Music by a Gentleman in Ireland, and performed before the late Bishop of Waterford, in his Cathedral, on Christmas-day. To which is added, A Hymn on Matt. v. 29, 30.

III. A Hymn to the God of Abraham, adapted to a celebrated Air, sung by Leoni, in the Jews' Synagogue.

IV. A Letter to Mr. Thomas Hanby, occasioned by the sudden Death of several near Relations.

V. Twelve Reasons why the People called Methodists ought not to buy or sell uncustomed Goods.

VI. An Answer to a Pamphlet entitled, A few Thoughts and Matters of Fact concerning Methodism, offered to the Consideration of the People who attend, encourage, and support Methodist Teachers. In a Letter to the Author.

VII. A full Reply to a Pamphlet entitled, *An Answer to a late Pamphlet of Mr. Wesley against Mr. Erskine.*

VIII. A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Toplady, occasioned by his late Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.

IX. A Scourge to Calumny, in Two Parts. Inscribed to Richard Hill, Esq. Part the first, Demonstrating the Absurdity of that Gentleman's Farrago. Part the second, Containing a full Answer to all that is material in his Farrago Double-distilled.

X. A full Defence of the Rev. John Wesley, in answer to the several personal Reflections cast on that Gentleman by the Rev. Caleb Evans.

XI. A Rod for a Reviler ; or, an Answer to Mr. Rowland Hill's Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.

XII. An Account of the Life of Mr. Thomas Olivers, written by himself.

XIII. A full Refutation of the Doctrine of Unconditional Perseverance ; in a Discourse on Hebrews ii. 3 : in which the Possibility and Danger of the total and final Apostasy of true Believers is demonstrated ; and the Epistle to the Hebrews is shown to be no other than a regular Treatise, or one connected Chain of Reasoning, on that subject. 12mo.

XIV. A Defence of Methodism : delivered Extemporary in a Public Debate, (but now considerably enlarged,) held in London, Dec. 12th, 19th, and 26th, 1785, on the following Question, "Have the Methodists done most Good or Evil?" 12mo.

XV. A Descriptive and Plaintive Elegy on the Death of the late Rev. John Wesley. 8vo.

XVI. An Answer to Mr. Mark Davis's Thoughts on Dancing : to which are added, Serious Considerations to dissuade Christian Parents from teaching their Children to dance. 12mo.

THE LIFE

OF

MR. DUNCAN WRIGHT.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in May, 1736, in the kirktown of Fortingale, near the river Lyon, and not far from the lovely banks of the "soft-winding Tay," Breadalbin, Perthshire.

I claim kindred to the Stuarts, M'Donalds, and M'Gregors' families; perhaps far more famed in story for martial exploits, than for any extraordinary attainments in religion.

It might have been better for me to have had a hardy, Highland education; but of this I was deprived by the removal of my parents to Edinburgh when I was very young. Here I had the best education my father could give me, who was my only schoolmaster. He was esteemed a pretty good scholar; but I doubt knew little of the life and power of religion. Yet he prayed with us at times, made us learn the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and took care of us to the best of his knowledge. I lost him early, which was a loss indeed! For my

mother, being too easy and indulgent, let us have our own way, which led us to all the follies and sins we were capable of. I do not remember that any creature took any pains to instruct me till I was near twenty years of age, but old Lady D., of Preston-Field, who at times advised me as well as she could. And yet the Lord did not leave me without drawings from above : for having a bookish inclination, I read and wept very often till my head ached, and hardly knew what ailed me. Only I wanted to be a Christian, and to be easy and happy, but knew not how. Had any living Christian taken a little pains to inform me, I doubt not but I should have embraced the proffers of mercy long before I did. Indeed, I never felt any spirit of opposition to religion and religious persons. For as I had neither the form nor the power of religion myself, I knew I had little reason to speak an unkind word of those that had any appearance of either.

I was from my infancy feeble and tender ; yet, having many relations in the army, no employment would relish with me but a soldier's life : hence my mother never could prevail with me to follow any regular business, and this exposed me to vain and wicked company. Yet having some tenderness of conscience left, repenting and sinning, resolving and breaking through my resolutions, made my life a weariness indeed. So, in order to be happy, I resolved to see the world in a military life. Hence I enlisted, the latter end of 1754, into the tenth regiment of foot. None of my friends knew what was become of me, till I wrote to my mother from Lime-rick in Ireland. My mother, being infirm, did not survive this long : she died the spring following ; and I fear my disobedience hastened her departure.

An awakened conscience will smart, first or last, for this sin, among others, stubbornness and disobedience to parents. So did mine; for the day I enlisted, I thought, "Now I have done for soul and body:" for I could form no conception how a soldier could be religious.

In the summer of 1755 we encamped near the city of Cashell, eight regiments of foot, and two of horse, where William Coventry, a corporal in the Royal Scotch, frequently preached. I heard him once, but felt nothing but a kind of wonder at his courage in preaching among such a set as we were. I little thought that in less than four years I should be engaged in the same work in another camp.

We returned to Limerick for winter-quarters, where I began to consider (as the soldiers had then a great deal of leisure time in the winter) how I should pass my tedious moments. I could play at cards, and other games, (then common among the soldiery, but now happily suppressed,) but I seldom liked my company. For though I could swear sometimes, yet I could not relish so much of it as they were addicted to. I therefore bought and borrowed all the plays, novels, and romances I could lay my hands upon; reading late and early. And my reading had this effect, at least, that it kept me out of worse diversions, and gave my mind a turn above such intemperance and lewdness as were too common in men of my rank.

At last an old soldier, in the same barrack-room with me, found fault with me for spending my time, and spoiling my eyes, in reading such trash. I thought, "I will show you how I can read religious books as well as others." But I had none of my own. I borrowed two from one of our soldiers. One of

them was "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," which, being written by way of dialogue, attracted my attention; and before I read it half through, I was truly though gently convinced that I was a lost sinner, and that Christ was all I wanted to make me easy, satisfied, and happy.

Now it was that a deep sense of my time, youth, and health, spent in sin and folly; my ingratitude to God, the best of fathers; my slighting of Christ so long, and grieving the blessed Spirit; melted my heart, and made my eyes a fountain of tears. I awoke as from a dream, and saw all about me, like the men of Sodom, blind and groping about for happiness; or asleep, with storms of wrath ready to burst upon their heads. The immediate consequence was, a distaste to all my books and diversions. I exchanged them for religious tracts: and, having a praying heart, it soon found a praying place; for as I had no place of retirement in my room, I found a covered battery on the castle-wall. This soon became my closet; and when on guard, I used to cover my head with my watch-cloak, and stopping my ears with my fingers, spent many a happy moment in converse with God, weeping and making supplication.

Although I now forsook, in a sense, all for Christ, yet there was, at times, such a mixture of seriousness and levity, that some might conclude I had no tincture of the fear of God. But my trifling in the day made me often water my couch with tears at night. But I had none to guide me; I did not know a man, among seven hundred, that had any knowledge of such a work as I now felt in my mind.

There was one, indeed, who I thought must have something in him, because he was sober, and read good books. But when I began to tell a little of

what I felt, I found him an entire stranger to everything of the kind. However, the Lord made up the want of Christian fellowship, by sending me such books, from time to time, as surprisingly suited my case; particularly Alleine's "Alarm," which proved of wonderful service to me. Among his directions for conversion, he advises the reader to enter into covenant with God, a form of which he has there given. I took the advice, set apart a day of fasting and prayer, wrote the covenant, and signed it; and it was not long before the Lord showed me He did not despise the day of small things.

There was a society of Methodists in the town, but I knew them not; and when I did, they were such objects of universal contempt, that I hardly knew what to make of them. However, the last night of this year, I ventured to go, and heard Mr. Oddie. I likewise began the year 1756 with them; and from that time never missed an opportunity of hearing, morning and evening.

I think it was in April this year, that the Lord justified me by His grace. I used to spend all my time in bed, while awake, in weeping and prayer; and it was in one of these weeping nights, that in an instant the Lord brought me out of darkness into His marvellous light. I did not know then what to call it; but its effects were many: I found an uncommon concern for the souls of the soldiers; and the sight of a Methodist used to set my heart on fire with love. Yet, for half a year, not a soul of them spoke a word to me, though I sometimes threw myself in their way. For, much did I long to be acquainted with them; but my shyness was such that I could not break through to speak to them.

Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. Thomas Walsh, made

us a visit this summer ; and O, what a heaven upon earth did I feel in hearing them ! and yet I could not speak to them for my life. At length, that serious man, Mr. Thomas Seccombe, took notice of me ; and when he was about to leave Limerick, desired Sidney Hoey (a mother in Israel she was to me and many of the soldiers) to get acquainted with me. She brought me to her house, and the same day to a class-meeting, which was a day of gladness to me ; for I had often found Solomon's words fulfilled, " Woe to him that is alone when he falleth." For when I fell into perplexities and temptations, I had no one to help me ; but now I found the real benefit of having fellowship with a loving people.

Part of 1757 and 1758 I spent at Dublin, and found their fellowship there also of very great service. The preachers were lively, and faithful lovers of discipline. The society retained much of their simplicity and teachableness, and were in a good degree prepared for the blessed revival which followed some time after, under Mr. John Manners.

It was of uncommon advantage to me to be among the Methodists, at a time when both the preachers and people loved all our discipline, and practised it. I saw the blessed consequences ; for few cared to stay among us, but such as retained their fervour for the whole of religion. False brethren especially were soon tired, and went to the Independents, Anabaptists, or Moravians. But with great simplicity we used to crowd to the sacrament at St. Patrick's in Dublin, or the cathedral at Limerick, every Sabbath. These were happy times to me ; for although I was bred a Presbyterian, (if I was bred anything,) yet the love of God threw down the walls of partition, and made me love to be there, where I found most of

the people of God. I soon saw our plan to be more noble than any poor, narrow dissenting scheme whatever, as intending the good of thousands and tens of thousands in the great bodies of the established churches; and I am still convinced, that our present situation is infinitely better calculated for general good than the best-planned separation that can be conceived.

What occasioned my commencing a preacher was as follows:—In September, 1758, we returned to Limerick; and as Government resolved to shoot a deserter in every city, *in terrorem*, the lot fell on a young man in our regiment to die in Limerick. His name was Joseph Newton; he was a Derbyshire man, twenty-two years of age. I longed to talk with him; but as he was kept in a public guard-house, with no place of retirement, I could not tell how to speak to or pray with him, among so many people. But when I found the adjutant had been to inform him that he must die on Monday, (this was on the Tuesday before,) I saw I had no time to lose. I went in, and found him weeping as if his heart would break, and reading a “Whole Duty of Man” with all his might: like a drowning man catching at anything to save him. I spoke a few words to him then, and again in the evening, though with uncommon reluctance, there being many soldiers round us. I prayed with him, and found very great freedom to speak to him and to all that were present. He had no plea, but saw himself an undone sinner without help, and almost without hope. Some of us visited him twice or thrice a day, and on Thursday his soul was set at liberty. From that time he witnessed a good confession to all that spoke to him. Every one that saw him go to the place where he was shot

could not but admire the serene joy that appeared in his countenance. He said but little, but his calm, happy death made a deep impression on many of our soldiers; for they could not but discern the difference between him and one they saw die awhile before at Dublin, who showed the greatest reluctance, the field-officer of the day being obliged to ride up to him several times to tell him he must die; while Joseph Newton was not above ten minutes on his knees before he dropped the signal, and went to paradise.

I thought now was the time to try what could be done among the soldiers. I therefore told several that as many as had a mind might come to my room every night after roll-calling, and I would sing, read, and pray with them as well as I could. They came, and crowded my room; and in a little while I had a class of them. But about the beginning of the year 1759 I was ordered for Scotland on the recruiting service. I found this not to be easy work for a Christian; yet, through mercy, I was kept from outward sin.

After an absence of four months, the French being expected to invade Ireland, we were ordered to join the regiment, which lay encamped near Kilkenny, and found my little flock, having had no one to look after them, were all scattered. The first morning we met (in a field adjoining) there were but three of us. But our number increased every time we met; and before our camp broke up, I had a little society gathered again. And here it was that I got the name of a preacher; for it being frequently late in the evenings before we could meet, before I had sung and prayed our light was gone out, so that I could not see to read, but was obliged to say something to them without a book, or send them away empty.

It was well I did not begin to preach among very knowing men ; for they might soon have silenced me, as a little thing would have done it : but here there was none to hinder me but the commanding officer, and he did not choose to do it. Though he did not like the Methodists, yet he wanted us all to be very good, as we did not know how soon our valour might be tried by the French. Therefore we had very strict orders against swearing, drunkenness, &c. ; but those orders did not effect any great reformation.

When we left the camp, as we still expected an invasion, we were scattered abroad in cantonments all over the south of Ireland. This hurt such of us as were weak in the faith very much. None can tell, but such as have tried, how hard it is for a soldier to stand his ground among so many unreasonable as well as ungodly men ; for such were most of the officers as well as soldiers : men whose tender mercies were cruel.

I had myself suffered much loss in my mind for a year, and consequently had little inclination for preaching. Hence, when we got the route for Galway, I was not at all sorry that there was no society to solicit me to preach among them. Even my friends among the officers were much concerned for me, as many serjeants were preferred to commissions : they said they doubted they could do nothing for me, as I made myself so ridiculous. Indeed, this did not move me. But my unhappiness of mind was the great hindrance to my preaching. Yet in Galway it was that I had the most clear, undoubted seals to my mission, in the conviction and conversion of souls who never had heard any other Methodist preacher. Some of them are a comfort to me to this day ; and some of them are fallen asleep in Jesus.

In 1761 we marched for Dublin again, and the following year back to Galway. All this time, from 1758 to 1763, I walked in darkness, and had no light. I fell into it by degrees; but by what particular thing, I am at a loss to know. But this I know, my case was truly deplorable; and yet I did not give way to any known sin, neither did I miss any means of grace. Nay, I often went to the Lord's table when, to all sense and feeling, I was as dead as a stone. My gracious tears were all dried up. My stony heart could not melt. And yet I heard the greatest preachers, read the best books I knew, and conversed or corresponded with the most gracious Christians I could hear of. Nay, I frequently exhorted or preached the whole time; yea, and in that season had apparent success to my labours. I remark this, to refute an idle conceit, that none are fit to teach others, but such as are happy themselves. I know that many times, though I forgot it while preaching, I was as miserable as a devil, both before and after. And it was often suggested to me, "Judas may cast out devils, and notwithstanding all this be only an outcast." I often saw myself like one enclosed all around with hewn stone; my strength and my hope perished from the Lord. As I knew very little of myself when the Lord justified me, He saw good to show me now my utter helplessness, by leading me into the painful school of self-knowledge. And a dull scholar I proved, being five years in learning what others have learned in less than five months.

Yet notwithstanding my wretchedness, our little society at Galway was wonderfully blessed. As there was about this time a glorious revival in many parts of the three kingdoms, I communicated to

them, from time to time, the intelligence I received of the work; and the fire soon kindled among them also. All were happy or in earnest but me; and I durst tell very few my sad case, for fear of hurting them. This was often the language of my heart:—

“My soul in sin so rooted stands,
No common miracle can move:
I know my spirit's cure demands
Thy whole omnipotence of love.

“But whether Thou hast ever heal'd
A spirit so desperate as mine,
It lies, alas! from me conceal'd,
In lowest depths of love Divine.”

If it be asked, what could induce me to continue in the means of grace? I answer, I never doubted my former experience of the truth and reality of religion; and, besides an unseen hand that upheld me, I retained a full conviction, that in the favour of God alone there was life and happiness. So I was determined to be happy in the favour of God, or refuse every other comfort.

It was when I was thus in darkness and in the deep, that the Lord, in a moment, restored to me the joy of His salvation. This was like a plenteous shower, upon a parched and dry land, that soon made my soul like a watered garden. The Lord now led me into green pastures, beside the still waters. What a change was this! The soul that was, before, all tumult and confusion, was now all joy and peace through believing. This was about June, 1763.

And yet I soon found I had not attained what J. Dillon and S. Hoey informed me they had attained; namely, a mind constantly stayed upon God, and kept in perfect peace.

Being about this time confined to my room by a violent inflammation in my cheek, my pain made me

pray the more earnestly, that the peace of God might keep my heart and mind also. The Lord heard and gave me a glorious answer. I felt such a sudden and such a delightful change, as I never before conceived possible. My joy was indeed unspeakable; my hope full of immortality; and my peace flowed like a river. I then understood those words as I never did before: "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Just then we were ordered to the north of Ireland, to quell a set of rioters, called Hearts of Oak. Being something better, I marched on till we came to Carrick-on-Shannon, where our surgeon told me I must go no farther, at the peril of my life. My excessive pain, and the being left behind, would at some other times have tried me sufficiently; but now,

"All was calm, and joy, and peace."

And here it was that I first understood how the blessed martyrs could clap their hands in the flames; for although for some nights my pain was excruciating, yet all was tranquillity within.

The little society here, and the M'Neily's family in particular, took remarkable care of me. The Lord grant they may find mercy of Him in that day! This state continued several months; but having none to direct me, and not being sufficiently aware of the need there was for constant watchfulness and prayer, I fell by degrees from that heaven of love.

In the beginning of 1764 I was called to suffer a little for the testimony of Jesus. And indeed but a little; for what were a few threatenings, a little reproach and shame, a few stones or rotten eggs, to what many of the dear servants of God have suffered even in this age?

Our lieutenant-colonel did not care what a soldier's religion was, provided he did his duty; but our major, a warm blunderer, to whom the command of the regiment was left for a time, thought it a disgrace to have a serjeant a preacher among them. He therefore resolved to drive me out of preaching, if possible. I shall not enter upon a detail of the several means he used for this purpose, as I believe he was ashamed of them himself before I left him. He found me so much the soldier, however, as not to be frightened out of what I thought was my duty. Yet I found it no easy matter to walk the streets of Newry, a gazing-stock to both old and young. At last, as he found he could not prevent my preaching, he hit upon a method to get quit of me; namely, to put me into the tenth company, which was soon to be reduced. And thus it was that the Lord thrust me out into the harvest; for I was determined not to leave the army till some clear providence set me free. Before the time came for the reduction of the company, some of the friendly officers wanted me to stay, and said, they would get the major to put some old serjeant in my place. I begged they would not, and they acquiesced. Some of them, indeed, wished I could persuade all their men to be religious, for they had no trouble with the Methodist soldiers, but enough with the others. Yet they told me, they feared what our enthusiasm would turn to; and mentioned Cromwell, who could preach and pray one part of the day, and kill and plunder the other.

Never were words more applicable to these fearful men than the following:—

“The same in your esteem,
Falsehood and truth ye join;
The wild pretender's dream,
And real work Divine;

“ Between the substance and the show
No difference you can find ;
For colours all, full well we know,
Are equal to the blind.”

Were the chaplains men of real piety and courage, much good might be done in the army ; but the chaplaincy is generally a kind of sinecure, and the care of souls is left to any worthless wretch that will do it at an easy rate. When we lay in one city, the care of four or five regiments was left to an unhappy man, who was an object of common ridicule among the soldiers for his perpetual drunkenness.

But although my commanding officer could not hinder me from preaching, and God gave me to see the fruit of my labours, yet I was not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind that it was my duty to preach : but this spring, at Waterford, God revived His work wonderfully among that society, and set my mind free from every scruple ; so that when Mr. Wesley wrote me word, that if I left the army, he had immediate work for me, I had no objection, but the precarious state of my health ; for by preaching loud and long, and by reading at all hours, I had brought myself so low, that our surgeon sometimes thought me in a consumption. Mr. Wesley told me, in answer to my objection, that our Master had all power in heaven and in earth ; and that as my day, so should my strength be. And in the latter end of 1764 I found myself at liberty to go where Providence directed.

I was now entering upon a new scene of life ; and though I was twenty-eight years of age, I was an utter stranger to mankind : hence I imagined that blunt honesty, with innocence, would bear me through anything ; but I have since learned, that we need the

wisdom of the serpent, as well as the innocence of the dove, in our dealings with men, even about their souls. I mention this as an apology for some parts of my conduct, which had not always a due mixture of calm wisdom ; my native impetuosity often hurrying me beyond the bounds of moderation,—a thing too common with well-meaning zealous young men.

I would observe farther, that I was kept in such watchfulness and tenderness of conscience, nine years after I knew something of religion among the soldiery, as, to my grief and shame, I have not always retained since that period. I was then continually among the open enemies of religion, which partly obliged me to vigilance ; but being since then chiefly among the professed friends of religion, how often have I been off my watch ! But whatever I have fallen into, I could never preach till I recovered a sense of the Divine acceptance. O, where are we safe, beyond the power of sinning, but in paradise ?

When I came to Dublin, our society and preachers received me in the kindest manner ; and a comfortable time I spent with them that winter.

One of our captains, without my knowledge, now recommended me to a late nobleman, who, he told me, had an easy place for me, and desired my answer in two or three days. I thanked him, and told him I had chosen another employment.

Here I was acquainted with Dr. Davis, whose case is worth relating. He was formerly remarkable for a peculiar lively turn of wit on all occasions, and happy was the company that could get him to spend the evening with them. But being persuaded by a friend to hear John Carr, one of our local preachers, his companions, alas ! lost their merry Andrew. He told me that he went to see the preacher merely to

take him off, as he expressed it: "But," said he, "while I was leaning on my cane, looking at him through my fingers, during his first prayer, an arrow went to my heart, which sent me home bruised and wounded." He then sought the true Physician, who soon brought him to a healthful mind.

The regiment of dragoons of which he was surgeon marched into Dublin while I was there. One day, being at the soldiers' infirmary, a serious man, the porter of the house, one Francis May, said to him, "Sir, we want prayer and a word of exhortation very much in this house: would you pray with two or three, sir, if I get them together?" "Really, Frank," said the doctor, "I never prayed in my life, but with two or three serious people; and I know not how to begin with any other." "Sir," said Frank, "it is high time you should begin. Begin to-day, sir; begin now!" The doctor was prevailed on. Away went Frank, and informed through all the house, that Dr. Davis was going to preach to them. Down came every soul that could crawl,—the sick, the lame, and the lazy,—to the long room, where the chaplains used to read prayers. Away came Frank to the doctor. "Now, sir," said he, "I have got a few of them." When the doctor came to the room-door, and saw the place full, he was for going back. "Nay, sir," said Frank, "you cannot go back for your life! There they are; the Lord has delivered them into your hands; and will you start from His work?" In short, the doctor went in, stood on a form, sung, and prayed; and having his pocket Bible with him, he read a portion to them, discoursed an hour and a half, and, from that time, preached to the soldiers wherever he could. As I knew his dangerous situation, I was a little afraid for him. But God took

care of him; for going to visit some prisoners in Newgate, who had a malignant fever, he caught the infection, and finished his course rejoicing in God his Saviour.

We had several remarkable conversions while I was in Ireland. One or two more may be mentioned. We often think it lost labour to talk to a man about his soul while drunk; but I know to the contrary. I knew one in the north of Ireland who, going home one summer evening much in liquor, saw a crowd of people on a green at some distance; and, imagining it to be a cock-fight, he would see it before he went home. The preacher, being in the application of his discourse, said, "Are there any drunkards here?" &c. The poor fellow, looking up, said, "Yes, I am one." At that instant he was seized with such concern for his soul, as never left him till he became a new man.

I add another remarkable case. We had a little society in the county of Wexford, who used to be much pestered with a Popish mob. They met in a long barn, with the door near one end. The rabble wanted sadly to know what they did at their private meetings; but as the barn belonged to one that was no Methodist, they durst not break open the door. At length they contrived that one of them should get into the barn before the people came, and let his companions in at a proper time. To conceal himself the better, he got into a sack, and lay down behind the door. When the society were all in, they fastened the door as usual. Soon after came the mob, hallooing and shouting to their friend to let them in: but God found other work for him; for being charmed with the first hymn, he thought it a thousand pities (as he afterwards said) to disturb

them while singing it. And when the prayer began, the power of God did so confound him, that he roared out with might and main ; and, not having power to get out of the sack, lay bawling and screaming. At last one ventured to see what was the matter, and, helping him out, brought him up, confessing his sins, and crying for mercy ; which was the beginning of a lasting work in his soul.

But to return. This winter three of the preachers going to Chapel-Izod, where one of them was to preach, as there was room in the coach, they invited me to accompany them. A river through which we were to pass happened to overflow part of the road. Our coachman, thinking to drive in the most shallow water, drove near a wall ; but the wheels turning on a large stone upset us. Through mercy we got out, with little more damage than being well wet ; but the coachman stood up to the neck, like one distracted, crying, " Murder, murder !" At last he got out ; and then I and two others (Mr. Johnson and Dempster) walked home, and were no worse.

In the spring, there being no preacher in the Waterford Circuit, I went thither, and spent some time very agreeably among my former acquaintances. And now it was that I saw what spirit many of the Irish Papists were of. While I carried a sword by my side, few of them cared to speak their minds ; but now, that restraint being removed, several of them told me to my face, that they thought it would be doing both God and the church service, to burn all such as me in one fire ! The infatuation of many of them, owing to the ignorance they are kept in, cannot be described ; for upon the least pretence, and often without any, they rise in large parties, well armed, to destroy the lives and properties of their

neighbours, oppose the magistracy, and even insult the army.

About this time, a party of the light horse, being on foot, were conveying one of the Whiteboys to Kilkenny gaol. In going through a village, the Papists crossed the way with a mock funeral. When they had got the soldiers in the midst, they threw down their coffin full of stones, and fell on old and young with the greatest fury. The soldiers defended themselves, till the sergeant and three or four more were killed, and several desperately wounded. For this, five of them were hanged at Kilkenny. They all died "innocent," they said, "as the child unborn!" So did five more, who were executed a little while before, for burning a mill, and burying the miller up to the neck. I could not understand at first how most of the Papists that die here by the hands of the executioner, die declaring their innocence, till I found out the secret: having confessed all their crimes to the priest, and received his absolution, they believed themselves guiltless, and were forbidden to make confession to the heretics. However, we had the comfort to see several of them brought to the experience of real Christianity. And there is no doubt but if there were a few preachers of Mr. Walsh's spirit, we should see many more.

Mr. Wesley having signified to me, some time before, that I might travel with him if I had a mind, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and met him at Limerick, in June, 1765. This and the next year, I had an opportunity of seeing most of our large societies in the three kingdoms; and, had my health, capacity, and industry, kept pace with my opportunities, it might have been a time of extraordinary improvement. Besides all other advantages, I had

constantly before me such an example of redeeming time, as I hope will be of service to me while I live. But however profitable my travelling with Mr. Wesley might be, as the exercise was too much, I was obliged to give it up.

It was also of service to me to spend some time in London, among some of our old, happy Methodists; who bore with my weaknesses, and by their prayers and example confirmed me more and more in the truth as it is in Jesus.

What the Lord has been doing by me in Kent, Essex, Norwich, Manchester, Macclesfield, in the Yarm and Thirsk Circuits, and in Scotland, is known to Him. I bless God that I have seen the work prosper and increase in most of the Circuits I have been in; not indeed in consequence of my preaching, so much as by some regard to our discipline, and the labour of my colleagues. I have been happy, in having those in general with me who were not drones, but hearty in the work of God. And their love to discipline has not been labour in vain. To God alone be all the glory!

Before I conclude, I must not forget to mention one circumstance, in order to encourage others, and to justify the observation, "that we hardly know what we are capable of, till we are put to the trial."

When I was in Scotland, I remarked that many of the clergy were men of sense and piety, and took real pains in their work. And yet there was in many places a want of care and zeal for the spiritual welfare of the poor Highlanders. Many of these, coming for employment to the larger towns, were destitute of all help for their souls, as they did not understand English. In Edinburgh and Glasgow there have been places of worship built for them within these

few years, and well supplied ; but in Aberdeen, Perth, and Greenock they still had none to help. When Mr. M'Nab went to Scotland, in 1769, he began to preach to them as well as he could, and wanted me to come to his help. Mr. Wesley accordingly appointed me for Scotland at the ensuing Conference, and desired me to try to recover my Erse : but of this I had no hope ; as I could not read a verse of it, and never spoke two minutes in it on religious subjects in my life.

However, when I came to Perth, and saw their forlorn condition, several motives induced me to make a trial. I therefore bought a New Testament in the modern Gaelic, and got one of the society who could read it to give me some instructions. By Christmas I had made such a progress, that my teacher was positive I could preach in it, and would needs invite the Highlanders to come and hear me. But I knew my deficiency better than he did : however, I was prevailed upon to let him invite them. He gave out the psalm, and sang it for me. When I began to pray in Erse, I should have been set fast, had I not learned the Lord's Prayer beforehand. When I began to speak, I was often obliged to break off, and address the people in English. But, by the grace of God, in less than four years I could officiate in that language two hours together, without a word of English. While we were thus employed, the ministers in Perth, and in several other places, wished us good luck in the name of the Lord.

This was by far the most delightful work I ever had. But it was often hard enough, as I commonly preached at Greenock in English, at seven in the morning ; then spent two hours, from ten to twelve, with the Highlanders ; walked to Port Glasgow,

and preached in the streets at four ; then walked back to Greenock, and preached at six o'clock, and then met the society. Although by this means I had many an aching head and pained breast, yet it was delightful to see hundreds attending to my blundering preaching, with streaming eyes, and attention still as night ; or to hear them, in their simple way, singing the praises of God in their own tongue. If ever God said to my heart, " Go, and I will be with thee," it was then, when, with much trembling and deep sighs, I have gone to preach to them, hardly knowing what to say. I extol the name of my adorable Master, that my labours were not in vain. How gladly would I have spent my life with these dear souls ! But my health would not permit it ; so I was obliged to leave them.

To conclude. How graciously did my heavenly Father strive with me by His Spirit even from my infant days ! And when I was an outcast, and lost as to anything of religion, He reclaimed the wanderer, and brought me to His fold ; then led me into the wilderness to show me my heart ; healed my backslidings, comforted and fortified me for sufferings ; and, knowing my feebleness, led me gradually on to preach to those who most needed my assistance.

And when He saw a little affliction needful, He sent it. And a profitable time it proved to me ; all thanks to the Sender ! I have since seen such beauty in holiness, and in the imitation of Christ, and have had such discoveries of the boundless love of God, as I never had before. O for an eternity to praise Him in !

If ever man could say the following lines, surely I may :—

"Pardon'd for all that I have done,
My mouth as in the dust I hide,
And glory give to God alone,
My God for ever pacified!"

STOCKTON, *March*, 1781.

MR. ATMORE states, that Mr. Wright was a truly upright and pious man; a faithful dispenser of the word of God; an ardent lover and conscientious observer of the Methodist discipline; and for about twenty-eight years an acceptable and useful preacher of God's word. He died in peace and triumph, in London, May 13th, 1791, in the fifty-fifth year of his age; and his remains were interred in Mr. Wesley's vault, behind the chapel in City-road.

The following account of his sickness and death was given by one who was a witness of both:—

"In the beginning of the winter of 1790 Mr. Wright caught cold, which, falling upon his lungs, threw him into a consumption. He struggled through the winter with great difficulty; and when attending Mr. Wesley's funeral, March 9th, 1791, said it was most probable that he should be the next that should be laid in that vault; which proved to be the fact.

"In April he was taken with a violent pain in both his sides, so as not to be able to lie on either of them; nor yet on his back, as his cough was exceedingly troublesome. His fever was high, and his pulse quick, every night, till towards morning, when he began to perspire, which afforded him a little temporary ease. He continued thus for about a fortnight, when he was seized one night with very

violent pain, which he supposed to be a symptom of immediate death: but at this he was not in the least dismayed. He remarked, that in the year 1762 he had entered into a superior light and greater liberty than he had ever enjoyed before; and from that time had walked constantly in the light of God's countenance, and could not be satisfied any day without a direct and clear witness of his acceptance with God. He had several remarkable manifestations of the Lord's mercy in the time of his affliction. In one of these he said, 'I am a witness that the blood of Christ does cleanse from all sin. O, the goodness of God to a poor sinner! The Lord hath finished His work, has cleansed me, and filled me with His fulness. O, what a weight of glory will that be, since Thy weight of grace, O Lord, is now so great!' It pleased the Lord to exercise him with strong pain; but no word dropped from his lips that implied any approach to murmuring or complaining. The joy of the Lord was his strength, and his hope was full of immortality. He continued in a happy state of mind till the morning on which the welcome messenger arrived, when he said, 'Jesus is come! He is now in my heart.' He was sensible to the last, and sunk gradually, with a serene and pleasant countenance, into the arms of his Redeemer, and expired without a sigh or a groan, while a few friends were in the act of commending his spirit to the love and care of Him who gave it."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS HANBY.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

MY father removed from Barnard-Castle, in the county of Durham, to live in the city of Carlisle, where he was employed by a company of gentlemen, to carry on a branch of the woollen manufactory. Here he married my mother, who was a person of some small property ; by whom he had three children, myself being the youngest. I was born December 16th, 1733.

After some years, the factory was given up, and my parents came to live at Barnard-Castle again. My mother died when I was about seven years of age, and my father soon after. He was much addicted to drunkenness, which made him neglect the care of his family ; by which means he reduced his helpless offspring to a variety of afflictions. I lived some time with an aunt, who had been a person of considerable fortune, but was reduced by the extrava-

gancy of my uncle, my father's brother. It is true, I was put to school for some years; but made no considerable progress in learning. Before I was twelve, I was put out to a trade; whereby a kind Providence enabled me to provide for myself such things as I stood in need of.

The first serious impression that I remember, was when I was about six years of age. I was in a yard belonging to the house where we lived, in Barnard-Castle, and looking up to heaven, I was struck with wonder, and called aloud, "God Almighty." But such horror seized me, as made me run home, and shut the door with all speed. My mother reproved me, and said I had been doing some mischief; but I assured her I had not. She then insisted upon knowing the cause of my uncommon haste, and of my shutting the door with such violence. I told her I was in the yard, and called aloud, "God Almighty," and I was afraid. What she thought, I cannot say; but she said no more to me upon the subject. A few years after, I was greatly alarmed by my sister talking of the day of judgment, which I had not heard of before. But these serious impressions wore off, and I began to be

"Rough in my manners, and untamed my mind."

When I was about thirteen, hearing the bishop was coming to confirm the children in our town, I began to think some kind of reformation and preparation was necessary. Accordingly, I applied to a relation, one John Robinson, a maltster, who was a sincere man, and esteemed and beloved by all men. He taught me all he knew; namely, many questions and answers, with a great number of prayers; instructed me in the Church Catechism, (for, though

I had learned it when at school, I had now entirely forgot it,) and, in short, made me, I thought, a very good boy. The Sabbath came when the bishop was to confirm; and I, having passed my examination with the minister, was introduced to the bishop. This was in the forenoon; and towards evening I went with some of my companions into the fields, and played at our usual games. But, before I went to bed, horror of conscience seized me, and I thought I heard a voice say, "Thy confirmation is made void; for thou hast broken the Sabbath." What to do now I knew not. However, I began to make myself good, by reading and repeating many prayers.

In this state I continued, till it pleased God, of His infinite mercy, to send a poor man, one Joseph Cheesebrough, a shoemaker, and a Methodist, from Leeds; who having received the truth himself, was willing to impart it to others; not by preaching or exhortation, but by friendly discourse with his former acquaintance, for he was a Barnard-Castle man. Joseph Garnet, one of our preachers, now with God, and a few others, first received the truth. They met together in an upper chamber for fear of the mob. They read the Scriptures, and the books you had then published, sang hymns, and prayed. I went one evening with a few of my ungodly companions; and as they were disposed to mock, I joined with them. However, I found something within that was far from justifying my conduct, and a secret persuasion that those despised and persecuted people were able to show me the way of salvation. I went again the next night, (for they met every night,) and begged I might be permitted to come in among them. Accordingly, I was admitted, and found myself sweetly drawn to seek an unknown

God. From that time I missed no opportunity of assembling with them. My cousin Robinson went at the same time; but the minister sent for him, and laboured to convince him that he and the Methodists were all in an error; and, to prove it, he showed him several old Puritanical books, which treated on the new birth, &c., and told him, "It is a false religion, because it is an old religion!" My cousin, at that time, and for four years after, was an entire stranger to himself and his need of a Saviour; the minister prevailed on him to leave the Methodists; and my great opinion of his piety made me, though contrary to my inclinations, leave them also. The minister told my cousin, provided he would form a religious society upon rational principles, he would sometimes come himself. He accordingly did, and in a little time we had a larger society than the Methodists, of formal professors who could play at cards, take their pleasures, and conform to the world in almost everything. During this period, God still worked upon my tender mind, and I was fervent in prayer, reading, and every other exercise of religious duty. I was sometimes much tempted, but knew not that it was temptation. I also found remarkable comforts, but knew not what they meant. I thought I would pray at the same place again; which I did, and was greatly surprised not to meet with the same joy. In this state of ignorance I continued till our society dwindled away, and none remained but my cousin and me. I said to him one night, "I fear we are wrong in leaving the Methodists; we can meet with none who can show us the way of salvation like them: come, and let us go and join them again." He had some objections, but my importunity prevailed with him. Accordingly we went, and, it being

their class-meeting, we were admitted. In about twelve months he found peace, and ever after continued in the way, a very serious, steady, and circumspect walker, till the Lord took him to Himself. About this time Mr. Whitford, the first Methodist preacher, came to Barnard-Castle. He preached abroad to a very large but unruly congregation. I was much affected, especially when he repeated those words, "O, let not Christ's precious blood be shed in vain!" (Mr. Whitford left the Methodists some years after, and turned Calvinist, and I suppose would now be shocked to use the words which had such an effect upon my mind, that I never could forget them.) After Mr. Whitford, we were favoured with Mr. Tucker, Mr. Turnough, Mr. John Fenwick, Mr. Rowel, and others; who often preached to us while the blood ran down their faces, by the blows and pointed arrows thrown at them while they were preaching. Soon after you, sir, paid us a visit, but were interrupted by the fire-engine being played on the audience. I, and our few friends, did all we could to prevent it, but were overpowered by the multitude.

God continued to draw me with strong desires, and I spent much time praying in the fields, woods, and barns. Any place and every place was now a closet to my mourning soul, who longed for the Day-star to arise in my poor benighted heart. And it pleased Infinite Mercy, while I was praying in a dark place, (greatly terrified for fear I should see the devil,) that the Lord set my weary soul at liberty. The next day the Lord was pleased to withdraw the ecstasy of joy, though I had no condemnation, and I had well-nigh given up my confidence, thinking it was nothing but a heated imagination. But the Lord met me

again, while I was in the fields, my usual place of retirement; and from that time I was enabled to keep a weak hold of the precious Lord Jesus.

When I was about eighteen, I had a desire to see Newcastle-upon-Tyne; thinking, if I was among more experienced Christians, I might be taught the ways of the Lord more perfectly. I stayed a few months there, and boarded with our worthy friend, Mr. Robert Carr, whose tenderness for my youth, and truly Christian behaviour, were of singular use to me; for which I shall ever love and esteem him. By attending preaching, night and morning, and conversing with many mature Christians, my understanding was much enlightened; and I think I may say, through all-sufficient mercy, that I grew in the fear and knowledge of God.

When I returned to Barnard-Castle, I stayed some time there, and told my beloved friends all I could remember of the many excellent sermons I had heard in Newcastle, the nature of their discipline, and the Christian spirit of the society in that place.

Having profited so much by my Newcastle journey, I thought I would take one more journey to Leeds, and after that I meant to settle at home for life. Accordingly I went, and here Providence was equally kind, in casting my lot into Mr. Richard Watkinson's family; where they put themselves to some inconvenience in boarding and accommodating me with a very agreeable lodging. I have often had a thankful remembrance of their kindness to me, and I hope the Lord will reward them for it.

My business now was that of stuff-making; and as I loved to labour hard, I was able to procure more than my necessities required. My method was, as formerly, to be much in the fields, praying and medi-

tating. I also attended all the means of grace; and on the Sabbath I frequently took a walk with Mr. Watkinson into the country, where he preached.

During this period, I can truly say, I walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; and my delight was in the law of the Lord, and in His law I meditated day and night.

About this time, a sudden impression was made upon my mind, that I ought to preach the Gospel. I concluded it was nothing but temptation, and would not for a moment encourage such a thought. But it came again, and with it "a horror of great darkness fell upon me," like that mentioned in Gen. xv. 12, and I was truly miserable. I remembered the wormwood and the gall that the preachers drank at Barnard-Castle; and I said in my heart, I will not preach. But the terrors of the Lord made me afraid, and His fear took hold upon me. I was in great bitterness of spirit, because of this conviction. Sometimes I thought it was from God; at other times I thought it was all from the devil. In this perplexed situation I continued some time, without ever mentioning my case to any one. I would frequently retire into my closet, and express myself in words like these: "Lord, of what use is my existence in this world? I am profitable neither to God nor man! I cannot preach; for I am a fool, and a child. O, let me die; for it is better for me to die than to live."

However, I was willing to preach, provided I was sure it was the will of God concerning me. But

"This way, and that, I turn'd my anxious mind;"

when a friend of mine, one John Smith, told me of a poor woman in the society who was supposed to be

dying, and that she was wonderfully happy. I had read in your tracts the accounts of many happy deaths, but had never seen one. I desired my friend, if he could, to introduce me to see her. He promised to call on me the next night. He did so; and as we were going, I prayed to the Lord that He would remove my intolerable load, and that if it was His will I should preach, He would show it to the dying saint I was going to visit. I said, "Lord, Thou canst as easily do this, as Thou canst cause her to triumph over death. If Thou wilt but show me a token by which I may know Thy will, then I will preach Thy word wherever Thou shalt please to send me."

We came to the house where the sick woman lay, and, as I was an entire stranger to her and every body besides, I stood at a distance. Mr. Shent came in, and prayed with her: I followed him to tell him our Barnard-Castle brethren would be glad of a visit from him. After I had delivered my message, I returned to the sick woman; and was told, she had made much inquiry for the young man who stood in the corner. I came to the bedside, and she looked me earnestly in the face, and said, "God has called you to preach the Gospel; you have long rejected the call; but He will make you go. Obey the call, obey the call." She put such an emphasis upon, "He will make you go," that it shocked me exceedingly.

I now resolved, through the grace of God, to make a trial. Accordingly I sent word to Bramley, that preaching would be there the next Lord's day in the morning. As I went along, my mind was perfectly resigned. I did not think about what I should say; but my heart said, "If He will have me to preach,

something will be given me to say that will be profitable ; and if He has not sent me, it will be a less cross to be confounded before the people, than to be a preacher of the Gospel."

I was rather behind the time, and the people were waiting, expecting brother Watkinson, as usual. They came to me, and asked where he was. and what must be done. I said in my heart, "The Lord will provide Himself a sacrifice." I stepped to the place, gave out a hymn, prayed, and took those words for my text, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." The people trembled for fear of me, and prayed heartily. God was pleased to visit us : two persons received a sense of pardon. I preached again at noon, and at Armley in the evening. This, dear sir, was my beginning, and what I looked upon as my call from God.

I was now occasionally employed by Mr. Shent, and the other preachers, to take part of a Circuit for them.

In 1754 brother Mitchell desired me to come and help them in the Staffordshire Circuit for a few months. Accordingly I went to Birmingham, Wednesday, &c. Brother Crab was then along with us ; and, as we were too many for the few places about Birmingham, I made an excursion into the wilds of Derbyshire, preached at Wootton, near Weaver-hill, the Ford, Snelson, and Ashburn, where there had been no such a being as a Methodist preacher. I had often found a great desire to preach in that town, but was at a loss how to introduce myself. However, I providentially heard of a serious man, Mr. Thomas Thompson, who kept the toll-gate, about half a mile from the town. I took Thomas White with me, from Barton-Forge. We came to

Mr. Thompson's, and introduced ourselves in the best manner we could. He informed a few of his neighbours, that there was a preacher at his house. Accordingly, Mr. Hurd's family, Mr. Peach's, and a few others came in the evening; I suppose as many as they durst invite. I talked to them, and expounded a part of the eighth chapter of the Romans. I found much liberty in my own soul, and the power of God rested upon the people, who were deeply affected. I stayed a few days, preaching morning and evening to as many as the house would hold. Miss Beresford condescended to assemble with us; and the Lord opened her heart, as the heart of Lydia. When I had been preaching Christ as a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, she cried out, "O precious Gospel! O precious Gospel!" From that time she continued steadfast, growing in grace, till the Lord took her in glorious triumph to Himself.

I left Ashburn for about a fortnight, to visit my new friends in Snelson, Wootton, the Ford, Bottom-house, &c., and returned again. I now found I must preach no more at the toll-gate house: the commissioners of the road had forbidden my friend Mr. Thompson to admit me. But Mr. Hurd, a gentleman farmer, by the desire of his family, whose hearts the Lord had touched, suffered me to preach at his house. It was now that a furious mob arose while I was preaching, and beset the house, and sprang in among us like so many lions. I soon perceived that I was the object of their rage. My mind was variously agitated: yet I durst not but cry aloud as long as I could be heard; but at last I was overpowered with noise. Some of my friends, in defending me, were bleeding among the mob, and with difficulty I escaped out of their hands. But as Mr. Thompson,

Mr. Isaac Peach, Mr. Hurd's family, Miss Beresford, and a few others remained steady, I was constrained to repeat my visits, till the Lord gave us peace. Mr. Thompson grew in the knowledge and love of God, till the Lord took him to Himself.

In a few weeks I returned again to Leek, and put up at one of the principal inns, in hopes of seeing some of the society, to encourage them to suffer patiently for the sake of Him who suffered death for them. I had ordered dinner; but, before it was ready, the mob collected together in a large body, and beset the inn. The landlord came to me in great confusion, and entreated me to leave the place immediately, or his house would be pulled down, and I should be murdered. I was obliged to obey. I mounted my horse in the yard, and rode through the mob, amidst stones, dirt, &c., whilst they were gathering in vast numbers from every part of the town, crying, "Kill him, kill him." There was from this time no access to Leek, till the chief men of this mob died miserably; and of the rest, some went for soldiers, and all of them were dispersed, except one man, who was alive a few months ago, in miserable circumstances.

I had frequently passed through Burton-upon-Trent, in my way to Ashby-de-la-Zouch; and found a desire to preach in that place, which appeared to me to be fit for Him who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I obtained leave to preach in a large house belonging to a shoemaker. Many attended, and I had reason to believe some were awakened. I gave out preaching for another day, and went accordingly. The town was alarmed; and a mob (as I understood afterwards) were hired and made drunk, by the principal persons

in town, effectually to prevent my preaching. It was in the winter season, and a dark night. All was quiet till I gave out a hymn. Then they approached the house; broke first the window-shutters, and then dashed the windows in. The head of this mob was a forgerman, half an idiot, who had bound himself under an oath he would that night have my liver. He brought the pipe of a large bellows, with which he made a frightful noise, and which was to be the instrument of my death. He made what way he could to me, but was rather retarded by the multitude that was before him. I observed him with the fury of a fiend; but knew not well what to do. To attempt to preach was in vain; for I could not be heard. I stepped off the chair, and got into a chamber unperceived by my enemy. When he found I was gone, he insisted upon going up stairs; and it was impossible to hinder him, and the numbers that were with him. It came into my mind, "Go down stairs, escape for thy life." I went down, and walked into the shoemaker's shop, unobserved by any one, though I passed through part of the mob. Soon after he got up stairs, searched the closets, beds, chests, &c.; and when he could not find me, foamed at the mouth like a mad dog. Then there was a cry in the street, "He is in the shop; he is in the shop." I now concluded all was over with me, and said, "Lord, give me strength to suffer as a Christian; nor may I count my life dear unto myself for Thy sake." I went under the shoemaker's cutting-board: meantime the mob were not long in breaking open two strong doors, that led into the shop. They did not see me; but one of them put down his hand where I was, and cried out, "He is here; he is here." I had now no

other means to use ; so I committed myself into their hands.

They hurried me into the house, and a very stout man, one of those who had been made drunk for the purpose, approached me: but his countenance fell: he took hold of my hand, and said, "Follow me." I imagined he intended to take me and throw me into the river, and I was content. I committed myself to the disposal of a kind Providence, expecting nothing but death. With difficulty he got me through the mob; and as he was one of the best boxers in the town, nobody durst oppose him. When we came to the door, he drew me short by the corner up a narrow street, put me before him, and said, "Run." I made my way to the fields, and he kept behind, keeping the rest off, then helping me over walls and hedges, till we had lost them all. I remained in the fields till midnight, and returned with a friend into town, and lodged till early in the morning, when I rode away.

After some time I went again to Leek, stayed ten days, and joined twenty-four in a society. A lawyer then raised a furious mob, who beset the house where I lodged. My few friends kept them off for a considerable time. But at last they lost all patience: they broke in, and were determined to drag me away; but it pleased the Lord, that a woman, who then neither feared God nor regarded man, opened a window that looked into the yard, and desired me to come into her house. Here I stayed till about two o'clock in the morning, and then made my escape over the mountains to the Bottom-house. This woman is yet alive; but she is a new woman, and in our society. The next day the mob were not a little chagrined to find they had lost their prey; and had no

other way to avenge themselves, than to burn me in effigy.

Soon after I was pressed in spirit to visit Burton-upon-Trent once more. The mob soon gathered: and had it not been for a peculiar Providence, in turning one of the head of them on my side, I believe I should have had that night the honour of martyrdom.

In weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in joy and sorrow, in weakness and trembling, were my days now spent. And I have frequently thought, if God would excuse me from this hard task, how gladly should I embrace the life of a shoeblack or of a shepherd's boy. I was surrounded with death, and could seldom expect to survive another day, because of the fury of the people. And yet it was, "Woe unto thee, if thou preach not the Gospel."

The summer following, 1755, the Conference was held at Leeds, where I was admitted as a travelling preacher. The next year I was sent to Canterbury. My little stock of money was nearly exhausted by the time I got to London; and though it was rather too long a journey for a winter's day, I was under a necessity to push forward, not having money enough to keep me and my horse upon the road all night. It was about eight o'clock at night when I got within sight of the lamps in the city. Two men, with large pistols then rushed out upon me from a narrow lane, and demanded my money. They took my watch and all the money I had in the world, which was two shillings and eightpence. (Indeed, sometimes, if a halfpenny would have purchased the three kingdoms, I had it not for weeks together.) I believe this robbery was permitted for good. It was at the time we expected an invasion from France, and the city

of Canterbury was full of soldiers. They were two soldiers who robbed me, and this excited a curiosity in their comrades to hear the preacher who had been robbed; and it pleased God to convince many of them. About ten were in society before this; and when I came away, they were increased to sixty.

Several of the following years I spent in Scotland; and I think this was, in general, the happiest period of my life. In 1763 brother Roberts and I came to Dundee. I preached in the evening, and he the next morning, when we parted. I came to Edinburgh, and he went to Aberdeen. Some time after, I had a strong desire to give Dundee a fair trial. Accordingly I went there, and stayed three or four months. I continued preaching in the open air till the 10th of November. And it was there God met with many poor sinners, and truly awakened them to a sense of their misery. So that before I left the place there were near a hundred joined in our society. About this time Mr. Erskine published Mr. Hervey's Letters, with a preface equally bitter. O the precious convictions those letters destroyed! They made me mourn in secret places. Mr. Erskine being much esteemed in the religious world, and recommending them through the whole kingdom, our enemies made their advantage of them. These made the late Lady Gardiner leave us, after expressing a thousand times, in my hearing, the great profit she received by hearing our preaching. Many were then brought to the birth, but by those letters their convictions were stifled. What a pity good men should help to destroy the real work of God in the hearts of men!

In 1765 I was appointed to labour in the Leeds Circuit. Here the Lord was pleased to try me, by

the death of a most amiable wife and my only child. O, how great a debtor to that grace which forbids our murmuring at the dispensations of Providence, though it allows us to sorrow, but not as men without hope !

In 1766 I laboured in the Birstal Circuit ; in 1767, in Staffordshire ; in 1768, in Bedfordshire ; in 1769 and 1770, in Newcastle ; in 1771, in Edinburgh and Glasgow. From hence I made a short visit to my old friends at Dundee ; and, notwithstanding the many difficulties they had had to encounter, I found many of them serious and steady. In 1772 and 1773 I laboured in Staffordshire again ; in 1774 and 1775, in Gloucestershire ; in 1776 and 1777, in Macclesfield. There the Lord was pleased again to afflict me in a very tender part, by making a second breach in my family.

“ Our lives are ever in the power of death.”

In 1778 I was appointed for Liverpool. I am now going on in my second year, among a loving, kind, good people, for whom I feel the greatest affection, and hope my weak labours are acceptable.

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a short account of my life ; but fain I would do something for Him who has loved me and given Himself for me. My sentiments in religion are the same they ever were. I believe man by nature is sinful and helpless ; that his only remedy is in Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every man ; that the Holy Spirit works conversion in the soul, and a fitness for the kingdom of heaven, by transforming it into the image of the ever-blessed God. This conformity I most ardently long for ; and hope, dear sir, you will entreat the Father of mercies for your affectionate son and servant in the Gospel,

THOMAS HANBY.

LIVERPOOL, *November 12th, 1779.*

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
DEATH OF MR. THOMAS HANBY,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

NOTTINGHAM, *January 11th*, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

As the friends of our much-esteemed brother and faithful minister of Christ, Mr. Hanby, will wish to see some account of his removal from our world to the regions of immortal glory, where the servants of Jesus rest from their labours, the following particulars will undoubtedly be acceptable to them, as well as to many of your readers.

On Christmas-day last Mr. Hanby expounded part of the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, at six o'clock in the morning, in the chapel at Nottingham: in the forenoon he preached upon Isaiah ix. 6, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor;" and in the evening, from 1 Tim. iii. 16, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." Little did those who heard him think that this was the last time that he was to bear a public testimony for his blessed Master; yet so it proved. O, how necessary to be always ready! "Blessed is that servant who when his Lord cometh shall be found watching." He also met four or five classes the same day. I hope that the people to whom he spoke will not soon forget the instructions he then gave them. In the

evening he was fatigued, and not well; and next morning much worse.

On Monday forenoon he had a violent pain in his stomach, owing, as was supposed, to the gall-stones not passing: (a disorder to which he was subject :) he made use of some medicines which were prescribed for him when he was taken ill of the same complaint at the last London Conference. On Monday evening and Tuesday he thought himself something better. Doctor Marsden was sent for, who had been useful to him when ill of the same disorder before. The doctor prescribed several things for him; but, alas! all was in vain!

When I came home to see my family on Wednesday, I found Mr. Hanby exceeding ill indeed: but he did not complain of pain; he was much oppressed with stupor, and yet quite sensible. In the afternoon the Rev. Mr. Hopper, minister of the Baptist congregation in Nottingham, called to see him. Mr. Hopper said, "I hope you find that Saviour whom you have preached to others, to be your support now?" Mr. Hanby replied, "I find my trust is in the Lord; but I do not enjoy much sensible comfort;" and complained of being oppressed with heaviness. The same kind friend called again on Thursday afternoon, and said, "Mr. Hanby, I wish you every blessing which I should wish to enjoy myself, if I was in your situation."

On Wednesday evening, seeing his affectionate partner in distress, he said, "God will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow;" and soon after, "I have left my all with God. What should I do, if I had my religion to seek now?" Speaking of the grave, he said, "There the weary are at rest."

On Thursday in the forenoon he was much engaged in prayer: and we also were exercised in the same way in his behalf, chiefly that the Lord would spare His faithful servant a little longer among us, if this might be for His glory. I asked him several times, if he found the Lord nearer to him as he grew weaker; and he always answered, "Yes." He exhorted his daughter Jane to seek an interest in Christ; and the two younger children came and kissed their dying parent.

In the evening Dr. Taft called to see him, and said, "My good sir, how are you?" He answered, "I am departing: but I have fought the good fight." Being now exceeding weak, it was with great difficulty that he pronounced the last words. We saw, with the greatest concern, that his dissolution was hastening on very fast; and, deeply affected as we were, brother Lowe and I spent some time in solemn prayer, that the Lord would accompany His dear servant through the valley of the shadow of death; that a convoy of angels might be sent to conduct him to the paradise of God; and that an abundant entrance might be administered to him into the peaceful regions of everlasting day. O, what a solemn season of love was this! The power of the Highest overshadowed us, and the glory of God filled the place. We all found ourselves brought near the gates of heaven!

A few moments after we arose from our knees, and were watching to see this blessed man draw his last breath: he quietly, without a sigh or groan, fell asleep. Thus the benevolent and meek Thomas Hanby left this vale of tears, on Thursday, a little after eight o'clock in the evening, December the 29th, 1796, aged sixty-three years.

His body was committed to the ground on the 2d of January, in the chapel, attended by a crowded assembly. Had the men of the world seen all the tears that were shed for this man of God, they might have said with great propriety, "Behold how they loved him." The good Lord sanctify his removal to us all !

I remain yours affectionately,
T. BARTHOLOMEW.

THE removal of those who have been eminent for piety and usefulness in the church is an event which will deeply affect the minds of all who sincerely wish the prosperity of Sion ; and more especially when we have been intimately acquainted, and closely united to such men of God. Ever since I heard of the death of my highly-esteemed friend and brother Mr. Hanby, I have felt what I cannot express. I am much concerned on account of his amiable widow and children, as their loss must be very great. But my grand concern is for the church. When those are taken away who have long been pillars in the house of the Lord, we may well tremble for the people. It is true, the Lord has the residue of the Spirit in His own hand, and He can pour it forth upon whomsoever He will : and it is also true, that those faithful servants of God have finished their work upon earth, they have died happy in the Lord, and left a good testimony behind them ; and for this we ought to praise His name : but when we consider the loss which the church sustains when such long-tried and eminently faithful preachers of the word are called away, we cannot but lament their loss.

I have known Mr. Hanby well for near forty

years, and have been particularly intimate with him for the last twelve years; therefore I can testify, from my own knowledge, that he was a man of a meek and quiet spirit. He bore the burden and the heat of the day, and patiently endured all the persecution, reproach, and contempt that an ignorant world could cast upon him. His natural temper was remarkably mild: I believe hardly any one ever saw him moved with anything like anger, or heard a rash or unguarded word drop from his lips. Yet, notwithstanding his easy and obliging disposition, where the cause of God and of a good conscience were concerned, he was firm as a rock. During the forty-three years that he travelled and preached the Gospel, I believe, no one can say that there was a blot upon his character, or even heard any complaint against him, unless it was for being too condescending and good-natured in matters of discipline, or too zealous in introducing the sacrament among us.

He certainly was both an acceptable and a very useful preacher, and universally beloved by the people. When he first visited Scotland, the Lord greatly blessed his labours, particularly at Dundee. For a considerable time before he went to that place, the inhabitants had been alarmed by an uncommon bright shining light, which appeared every night on a piece of ground near the town. Mr. Hanby, without any previous knowledge of that circumstance, happened to fix his pulpit upon the very spot where the light had been seen, which drew the attention of the inhabitants, and greatly increased his congregations.

Mr. Hanby was, in his day, a burning and a shining light; but he is now no longer an inhabit-

ant of our vale of tears ! Indeed, the first generation of Methodists, both people and preachers, are almost all gone to their eternal rest. Very few are left behind. Forgive me, brethren, if on this occasion I drop a tear, and in the fulness of my heart pray, that a double portion of that Spirit which influenced the first Methodist preachers may rest upon you who are likely to be their successors. Permit one who most sincerely loves you, but who will shortly follow Mr. Hanby, to entreat you, by the tender mercies of God, and by the love you bear to His blessed cause, to labour with all your might in maintaining the life and power of godliness, both in your own souls and those who hear you. Promote old genuine Methodism, which stands in the renewal of the soul in righteousness and true holiness. Remember, brethren, that the whole weight of the cause of God will very soon rest upon your shoulders ; and seriously consider, how much will then depend upon your walking closely with God, upon that state of mind in which you live in His sight, and labour in His vineyard. How happy will it be for you, and how well for the people, if you daily experience, and upon good ground can say, with the holy apostle, "I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life I now live in the body, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me !" Many eyes are upon you, and you have still numerous enemies to contend with : for notwithstanding outward persecution is in a great measure ceased, so that your opponents are not so furious as they once were, yet they are not less subtle and dangerous : therefore you have still need of the whole armour of God, that

through His strength you may conquer all that oppose you.

You see one and another of those venerable men, who acted the part of fathers toward you, are called away; and those who now stand at the helm will soon follow them. I know not how your minds may be affected with these things; but I assure you I feel what I cannot express.

The death of our valuable friend has brought to my remembrance the lines that Dr. Watts wrote on the death of a great and good man, and which, I think, with a little alteration, may be applied to Mr. Hanby.

“Great Gouge to dust! How awful is the sound!
 How vast the stroke is! and how wide the wound!
 Yea, 'tis a vast uncommon death!
 Yea, 'tis a wound immeasurably wide;
 No vulgar mortal died
 When he resign'd his breath.
 The Muse that mourns a nation's fall
 Should wail at Gouge's funeral;
 Should mingle majesty and groans,
 Such as she sings to sinking thrones,
 And in deep-sounding numbers tell
 How Sion trembled when this pillar fell!
 Sion grows weak, and England poor:
 Nature herself, with all her store,
 Can furnish such a pomp for death no more.
 Ye remnants of the sacred tribe,
 Who feel the loss, come share the smart,
 And mix your groans with mine:
 Where is the tongue that can describe
 Infinite things with equal art,
 Or language so divine?”

I am your very affectionate brother,
 J. PAWSON.

LONDON, *February 10th*, 1797.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE dying sayings of those who have long adorned the Gospel of Christ by a holy life and conversation, and more especially when they have faithfully preached that Gospel to mankind, are highly esteemed by the children of God of all denominations: this consideration has induced me to add some further particulars respecting our much-lamented friend Mr. Hanby.

Being earnestly pressed by our friends at Nottingham to go over and preach a sermon on that mournful occasion, I very reluctantly took a journey to that house of sorrow. My mind, indeed, was much afflicted for the death of my friend; for which reason, as well as for others, I judged myself to be a very improper person to undertake such a work: but I yielded to the importunity of the people, being glad to find that they entertained a sincere regard for him who had faithfully laboured among them. By so doing, I had an opportunity to speak in the name of the Lord to crowded congregations, to drop a tear over the grave of my dear friend, and I also learned the following particulars concerning him:—

On the Tuesday after Mr. Hanby was taken ill, he desired his eldest daughter to read to him the 16th chapter of St. John's Gospel. It is well known that this, and the chapters connected therewith, are peculiarly affecting, as they contain the last solemn discourse which our Lord delivered while upon earth, as well as His last prayer with His disciples. Many dying Christians have desired these chapters to be read to them.

On Wednesday evening a friend said, "I hope you find that the Lord is good to you." He replied, "The Lord is my rock; upon what He hath done and suffered is all my dependence; His precious death and intercession is all my hope." At another time he said, "The Lord is better and better to me: He has taken away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Sensibly feeling his own weakness, he said, "Helpless, poor, and needy, but—'Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out;'"—and added, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they shall comfort me. I will fear no evil." Being in extreme pain, he said, "This is great work." One who was present asked, "What is great work?" He replied, "Dying work is great work."

On Thursday afternoon, when very near death, he said, "'I am the resurrection and the life,' saith the Lord: 'whosoever believeth in Me, though he was dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.' Believe ye this?" Mrs. Hanby, seeing, with the deepest sorrow, the dissolution of her best friend hastening on apace, said, "Can you speak to me?" He replied, "Yes, I can tell you to cast your care upon the Lord, for He careth for you: He will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow."

Although his pain was very acute, yet his understanding was quite clear to the last; so that he could readily quote the above remarkably pertinent passages of that blessed word of God which he had so greatly delighted in for many years, and no doubt found it spirit and life to his soul.

May we follow him as he followed Christ, that in

due time we also may depart in peace, our eyes
having seen the salvation of God.

So prays your affectionate friend,
J. PAWSON.

ON MR. THOMAS HANBY, PREACHER OF THE
GOSPEL.

BY A YOUNG LADY.

SOLDIER of Christ, farewell! thy race is run,
Thou' hast kept the faith, and nobly served thy Lord,
Fought the good fight, the glorious victory won,
And now hast enter'd on thy great reward.

Departed saint! and shall we mourn thy flight?
Or bid our breasts with holy triumph swell
To greet thy entrance on the realms of light,
Check the full tear, the bursting sigh repel?

The crown of righteousness is now thine own;
Thine to behold our God's unclouded face;
With heavenly harps before the' eternal throne,
To join the Wesleys in the songs of praise.

Yet why from numbers drops the gushing tear?
Scotia, your valued friend has Jordan cross'd:
Yes; weep, ye children of his faith and prayer,
Another father hath our Israel lost.

But, no:—hold fast your hope unto the end:
You shall be stars to glitter in his crown;
You shall with him the heavenly mount ascend
In God's great day, his ministry to own.

The Lord who first our spreading churches raised,
Will still vouchsafe His all-sufficient grace,
To bless the' assemblies where His name is praised,
And bid another fill our Hanby's place.

Call'd by Jehovah in the bloom of youth
The hallow'd standard of the cross to raise,
Boldly he preach'd the Gospel's sacred truth,
The joyful tidings of unbounded grace.

His bosom glowing with celestial love,
He calmly suffer'd persecution's ire,
Repaid his enemies with prayers, and strove
To pluck the brands from everlasting fire.

A true expounder of the sacred word,
The weak he strengthen'd, and the careless warn'd;
Cut to the heart, the trembling sinner heard
The awful judgments of that God he scorn'd.

A lively preacher more than forty years,
He faithfully fulfill'd his high behest:
Rear'd by his pious ministerial cares,
Lo, ransom'd thousands rise to call him bless'd.

Call'd by his Master to the painful test,
He nobly bore the consecrated cross.
You who have known the virtues he possess'd,
Alone can fully estimate his loss.

Just granted here to hail Immanuel's birth,
Then summon'd to behold His face above,
To join in heaven the ransom'd sons of earth,
And share the purchase of redeeming love.

Disrobed of all his terrors, Death drew nigh,
Behind a band of shining seraphs stood,
He pointed Hanby to the opening sky,
And dipt his dart in the atoning blood.

The faithful Christian felt the stingless wound,
And to his God resign'd his fleeting breath,
Beheld heaven's portals through the gloom around,
And shouted "Victory!" in the arms of death.

O bless'd conclusion of a glorious race!
The goal attain'd, the promised prize is given:
With holy joy thy blissful soul we trace,
Escaped from earth to happiness and heaven.

A. R. C.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. ALEXANDER MATHER.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. SIR,

1. I WAS born at Brechin, in North Britain, in February, 1733, of reputable parents, who made it their business to bring me up in the fear of God. They instructed me early in the principles of religion, and took particular care to keep me from evil company: so that, when I grew up, I was an utter stranger to the vices common among men. And I took pleasure in reading good books, and learning our Catechisms by heart. When I was at the Latin school, it was the custom of our master every Lord's day, after the evening service, to hear what we could remember of the sermons, and to pray with us. Under one of his prayers, (when I was about ten years old,) I was struck with strong convictions; and these never quite left me, but I always retained a desire to be a Christian.

2. Soon after this, out of a childish frolic, I went

away with a party of the rebels. But I knew not what I did. I hereby exposed myself to many hardships and dangers. But the Lord delivered me out of all. Many mighty ones fell on Culloden-heath, and in the way to Inverness, and indeed on every side; yet I was mercifully preserved. But when I came near my father's house, there was no entrance for me; and I knew not where to go, till my mother resolved to take me to a relation of hers, near Perth.

3. We had a large river to cross, which was much swelled by the late rains. We were just got into the boat, when a gentleman on horseback came and begged us to stay and take him in, which we accordingly did. He seemed much fatigued. My mother desired me to hold his horse, which I did, twisting the bridle round my hand. When we were about the middle of the river, the horse took fright, and leaped out of the boat, taking me and the oars and both the boatmen with him; so that none were left in the boat, but my mother and the gentleman, without any means of helping themselves. The horse swam to the opposite shore, dragging me with him; then turned back, and swam to the shore we had left. He then jumped out, pulling me just above the water; but I there lost my hold, and fell back into the river. It carried me down, rolling me over and over, till it brought me to the side of the boat, which was strangely got to the same shore. They caught hold of me, and pulled me in.

4. Here I cannot but remark several providential incidents: (1.) That both the boatmen should get safe to that side of the water. (2.) Yet, when they were there, they should be able to get the boat, with my mother and the gentleman safe in it. (3.) Yet

the horse did not leave me on the opposite side, where to all appearance I must have perished. (4.) Yet, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the stream, the horse should reach the land above the boat. Had it been below, I had probably been lost. I admire above all, the exact timing of every circumstance! Had I been brought to the same side first, I could have had no help: had the boatmen reached the opposite side, they in the boat could have had none. And had any of us been carried but a little lower, we must inevitably have been swallowed up in a whirlpool.

5. After having thrown up much water, I was so far recovered as to be able to take boat again. And having got safe over, we travelled twelve Scotch miles (eighteen English) before night. But we could not travel without much danger, as the country was full of parties, both horse and foot, who abused all the strangers they met with, and often took them prisoners. When we came near a town, we inquired of one we met where we could have a quiet lodging. She said, she could recommend us to no inn; for they would inform the soldiers of us, who were very rude to all strangers, especially to women; but if we would put up with the house of a poor man, she knew one that she thought would receive us. So she conducted us to a little cottage, where we found the man engaged in family worship. When it was ended, he looked upon my mother, and said, "Good wife, I have no place fit to entertain you, who appear to have a good home somewhere. Neither can I protect you, if the soldiers hear you are in my house. But if you please to sit by the fire, with a little straw for the lad to lie on, you are welcome." They then gave us something to eat and drink, which we

received with thankfulness to God. The good woman then laid me down on the straw, and sat by my mother till the morning; when, having been commended to God in prayer by our host, we went on our journey.

6. My mother's brother was a considerable farmer, in the Carse of Gowry, near Perth. Thither we got before sunset, and were kindly received, till my mother told him her design of leaving me there. But his wife opposed it much, fearing lest, if it was discovered, they should be ruined for harbouring me. However, my uncle, seeing the distress my mother was in, overruled her, and said I should stay. And the next morning he sent a servant with my mother, who saw her safe home.

7. I stayed the Sunday at my uncle's. But on Monday morning, before sunrise, he called me, (his wife having prevailed,) and told me, "You must go hence." So I set off with one to guide me across the mountains. He then left me, to find my way as I could, to a place and a person I had never heard of before; but I had a line to the man. Providence brought me to the place; but the man was not at home. However, he came the next day, and received me kindly. Here I stayed till about Midsummer, and then removed to a distant relation's, where I stayed till November. It was then judged I might go home safely; but when I came, my father would not let me come into his house. Nay, he went and made information against me to the commanding officer; and I should have been sent to prison, had not a gentleman of the town interfered for me, and procured leave for me to lodge at my father's house. In the morning a file of musqueteers came to take me into custody, and brought me to the officer.

After asking many questions, he told me, "You may go home." But when I came to the door, the soldiers, not knowing his order, were going to carry me to prison; till he looked out of the window, and bade them let me go. However, my father would not put me to school any more, but kept me to his business, that of baking.

8. I continued with my father till the beginning of May, 1751; when, being well acquainted with my business, I determined to go abroad. I set out with another young man, who was engaged in Perth. Here a place was provided for me in a pious family, where I remained till after Christmas. Two persons then came from London, with one of whom I contracted an intimate acquaintance. One Lord's day she asked me to go with her to the Episcopal meeting. It affected me much, and from that time I attended it whenever I could. And I cannot but say, it was of great use to my soul, and has proved so ever since.

9. About this time I formed a purpose of going to London; and having taken leave of my relations, we set sail from Montrose about the middle of June, 1752. When I came to London, I knew no one there; but the kind hand of God was over me. I found a brother of my father's, who, being of the same trade, took me to work with him, till he procured me a place in a serious family at Billingsgate. But as I was a foreigner, my master was summoned to Guildhall, and obliged to put me away. In a little time I got me another place, near Whitechapel-bars. And as I was strong and active, my master persuaded me to engage for a year certain. Afterwards he did not use me well: till one day, being in a passion, he ordered me instantly to quit his house; which I immediately did.

10. In the year 1753 my present wife, who was born near where I was, and had lived several years with my parents in my infancy, heard I was in London, and resolved to see me. We had not seen one another for many years, and were both glad of the meeting; and as I was then out of place, we had opportunity of seeing each other frequently. On February 14th we were married. I had then forgot the resolutions I had often made of living wholly to God, whenever I should marry; but He soon brought them back to my remembrance, by laying affliction upon my wife. I now began to be in good earnest for salvation. I bought up all opportunities for prayer. I resolved to break through all opposition, and to serve God with all my heart.

11. But it still lay heavy upon my mind, that I had not performed my vow of praying with my wife. And my convictions increased day by day, till my appetite was gone, and my sleep departed from me; my bones were filled as with a sore disease, and my tears were my meat day and night. I now broke through, and prayed with my wife; and we never after left the practice. It was not long after this, that she knew God to be a pardoning God. And all that summer we continued praying and striving together, and steadily walking in all the ordinances of God.

12. After living at Hampstead some time, I removed to a place in St. Katherine's. While I was here, I was one day going hastily along the street, and a loaded cart stood in it, which nearly filled it up. However, I went on, thinking I could get by; but just as I was going by, it moved, caught my basket, crushed me up against the wall, and dragged me along till we came against a shop-window, which

gave way, and released me. Every one that saw it supposed I should be crushed to death, or at least that my arms or legs would be broken. But I received no hurt at all, besides a little bruise on the back of my hand.

13. In September, 1753, I was hired to Mr. Marriott. Our meeting was not expected on either side : he had been inquiring the character of another, which he did not approve of; and I was inquiring for a master, when he came and asked me if I was out of place. I answered, "Yes." He asked if I would keep good hours; which I promised to do. So we agreed, and I entered upon his service. Here I found what I had long desired, a family wherein was the worship of God. This stirred me up to be more earnest in seeking Him; to be exact in praying by myself every morning, and with my wife every afternoon. And we continued seeking Him with our whole heart, and shunning whatever we thought offensive to Him. We used, likewise, every means of grace. I have sometimes gone to my knees when I was going to bed, and have continued in that position till two o'clock, when I was called to go to work.

14. My wife had some time since found a degree of peace with God. But I could find no peace; nor could I tell what hindered, unless it were the baking of pans, as they called it, on Sundays. I would gladly have refrained from this, but then I must have left my place; and I had no hope of finding another place which would not have been liable to the same inconvenience. However, I resolved, as soon as Christmas was over, to give up my place at all events. Meantime my flesh consumed away, like as a moth fretting a garment. And my bones were

ready to start through my skin; for I had no rest day or night. The following Sunday, my wife and I ventured for the first time to the holy communion; and I found some comfort; but the sense of my profaning the Sabbath soon took it away. I now resolved to delay no longer than the next day, being willing to suffer rather than to sin. Accordingly on Monday morning, as soon as my master came down stairs, I gave him warning: he did not then speak one word; but soon after he came into the shop, and asked me if I had got another place. I answered, "No." He said, "Why, then, would you leave this?" I answered, "Because I dare not commit sin by breaking the Sabbath, as I have done." He used many arguments with me, but in vain. I told him, "I must abide by the word of God, whatever be the consequence; but I will not go away till you suit yourself with another man."

15. God now gave me much confidence, and I found much power to pray, that if it was not His will we should part, He would incline my master to give it up. And the same day he went, with a neighbouring baker, to all of the trade in Shoreditch and Bishopsgate Without, proposing that they should all enter into an agreement to give it up at once. All but two agreed. He then advertised for a meeting of master-bakers upon the subject; but nothing could be concluded. Afterwards, I supposed, he asked the advice of our brethren at the Foundery. After he had taken all these steps, more than I could reasonably expect, he told me, "I have done all I can, and now I hope you will be content." I sincerely thanked him for what he had done, but told him I could not stay any longer than till he had suited himself. But I continued in prayer. And on

Sunday evening, after family worship, he stopped me, and said, "I have done to-day what will please you: I have stayed at home and told all my customers I will no more bake on a Sunday." I told him, "If you have done this out of conscience toward God, be assured it will end well." And so it did. That very year his trade considerably increased. And he had a large augmentation of his fortune, so that he was enabled to relieve many that were in want, and also to lay up abundance for his children. May they herein tread in their father's steps!

16. He then asked me, how I came to scruple baking on Sundays. And I told him simply how God had dealt with my soul. And I believe it was then he first felt that affection for me, which continued to his dying day. (From that time both he and my good mistress were particularly kind to me and mine; and when, some years after, my station in London placed me in some sense over them, there were none in the society that more fully submitted to every branch of discipline.) It was then he asked me to go with him to the Foundery, which I did at five the next morning. When I came back, I told my wife where I had been. It grieved her much, as she believed all the idle reports she had heard; many of which she rehearsed, and added, "Now our peace is broken for ever." This stirred me up to be more earnest in prayer, but did not prevent my going every morning. On Sunday she was persuaded to go with me, though much afraid of my being drawn into some wrong way. John Nelson preached an alarming discourse, which I hoped would affect her much. But, on the contrary, she was much disgusted, saying, "He has shown me the way to hell;

and not the way to get out of it. But I thank God, He has shown me that Jesus Christ is the way ; and has brought me out of it too." However, she went again the next Sunday. Mr. Charles Wesley then preached, and described the whole process of the work of God in the soul. She followed him step by step, till he came to the abiding witness of adoption, and here he left her behind. She was now both pleased and profited, and we now went on hand in hand in the ways of God. But still I did not find the Spirit of adoption, though I sought it diligently, continuing instant in prayer, and attending the word every morning and evening. Indeed, this was not without difficulty ; for I had no time for either but what I took from my sleep, which should have been from six to ten in the evening, and from half-past four to six in the morning. I now slept little and ate little, and the grief of my soul drank up my spirits. But yet I could not believe, though I continued in prayer and supplication day and night, seeking God in sincerity of heart, and carefully departing from evil.

17. About this time my wife and I were permitted to stay at the meeting of one of the classes. I was much pleased and refreshed ; but she said, "They had all agreed what to say, in order to catch us." Such is the folly of prejudice ! It was soon after this that you returned from the Bristol Hot-wells, (being just recovered from your consumption,) namely, on Easter-eve, 1754. The next day you preached at West-street, April 14th : it was the first time I ever saw or heard you. Under that sermon God set my heart at liberty, removing my sins from me, as far as the east is from the west : which the very change of my countenance testified, before my tongue

could utter it. I had no great transport of joy; but my load was gone, and I could praise God from the ground of my heart, all my sorrow, and fear, and anguish of spirit, being changed into a solid peace.

18. But on Monday, in the afternoon, as I was going along, I began to think, "You fancy your sins are forgiven, but you are deceived." I had but a little time given way to these thoughts, before I was quite miserable. And when I got home, my wife immediately asked, "What is the matter with you?" I said, "Matter enough: I have deceived my own soul. I wish I had my sorrow again." She strongly urged me not to reason, but believe; to look unto Jesus, as giving Himself for me. I was encouraged. I soon recovered my peace, which, by the mercy of God, I have not lost since. Soon after we both joined the society, and met in brother Goode's class: and this, among all the means of grace, was peculiarly useful to my soul.

19. About this time my elder brother, who used the sea, after being wrecked, got his passage to London. He was easily convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. So being all of one heart and one mind, we rejoiced in God all the day long. But it was not long before I had strong impressions upon my mind, that God had called me to preach. I mentioned this in my band, after I had often sought God by fasting and prayer. We set apart some days for the same exercises. Afterwards they advised me to mention it to you. You said, "This is a common temptation among young men. Several have mentioned it to me. But the next thing I hear of them is, that they are married, or upon the point of it." I said, "Sir, I am married

already." You said, "Care not for it; but seek God by fasting and prayer." I answered, "This I have done." You strongly recommended patience and perseverance therein; and said, you doubted not but God would soon make the way plain before my face.

20. Soon after you appointed me to be the leader of a band, and in a little time of a class. And God blessed me in both: but this did not at all alter my conviction that I must preach; nay, it grew stronger and stronger, till, having no rest day or night, I was constrained to come to you again, and tell you just what I felt. You told me, "To be a Methodist preacher is not the way to ease, honour, pleasure, or profit. It is a life of much labour and reproach. They often fare hard, often are in want. They are liable to be stoned, beaten, and abused in various manners. Consider this before you engage in so uncomfortable a way of life." I replied, I had no desire to engage therein, unless it was the call of God; and I did not regard what I suffered, in doing the will of God. You said, "You may then make a trial to-morrow morning at Snowsfields chapel." I did so. The Monday following you appointed me for Wapping chapel, and for the Foundery on Tuesday morning. It was near ten at night when I received the message. I soon went to work, but was engaged in meditation and prayer for assistance all the time I was making my dough. As soon as I had done, (the rest of the family being in bed,) I went to prayer, in which I found great liberty. I then read in my Bible to find a text, and continued reading and praying, till two o'clock. It was then time to call my fellow-servant, and we went to work together, being employed, as usual, till near four, in

preparing the bread for the oven. All this time I was still in meditation and prayer, but could not fix upon a text. Soon after four he went to bed again, and I went to prayer, till a quarter before five, when I went to the Foundry, but with much fear and trembling; and when I took up the Hymn-Book, I was so faint, that I could not speak so as to be understood. The people therefore could not sing; and as I was no singer, we were all at a stand. This did not a little increase my agitation, which was so great that I could not keep one of my joints from shaking. However, in a while I went on; and after prayer, opened the Bible on those words, "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God with your body and spirit, which are God's." I now left the determination of this weighty affair with you, desiring that if you judged I was called of God to preach, you would employ me, (as my business would permit,) just when and where you pleased.

21. In a little time I was more employed than my strength would well allow. I had no time for preaching, but what I took from my sleep; so that I had frequently not eight hours of sleep in a week. This, with hard labour, constant abstemiousness, and frequent fasting, brought me so low, that in a little more than two years I was hardly able to follow my business. My master was often afraid I should kill myself: and perhaps his fear was not groundless. I have frequently put off my shirts as wet with sweat as if they had been dipped in water. After hastening to finish by business abroad, I have come home all on a sweat in the evening, changed my clothes, and run to preach at one or another chapel: then walked or run back, changed my clothes, and gone to work at ten, wrought hard all night, and preached at

five the next morning. I ran back to draw the bread at a quarter or half an hour past six; wrought hard in the bakehouse till eight; then hurried about with the bread till the afternoon, and perhaps at night set off again.

22. It is true, I need not have continued so long in this way. For you proposed my going to Ireland with you, as a travelling preacher, in the beginning of March, 1756. I cheerfully agreed thereto, as you promised my wife should be provided for in my absence. This I mentioned to one of my friends, who said, "No doubt he intends it; but when he is gone, the stewards will do as they please;" adding, "How can you labour in Ireland, while your wife is starving here?" I thought, however, I will talk with the stewards myself. I did so; and Mr. Broelts and Hobbins asked, "What will be sufficient for your wife?" I answered, "Four shillings a week." But this they were unwilling to allow. So I remained at my business, till another pointed out, which I followed till August, 1757. It was then agreed that I should travel, and that my wife should have that fixed allowance. This was the beginning of that settlement for preachers' wives, which (with the addition of forty shillings a year) continues to this day.

23. I was appointed for Epworth Circuit in Lincolnshire; which then included the Gainsborough, Grimsby, and Sheffield Circuits. I left London, August 15th, 1757, to walk to Epworth, about a hundred and fifty miles. My fellow-labourers were Thomas Hanby, Thomas Tobias, and afterwards Thomas Lee. It pleased God to give me much of His presence in my own soul, and to let me see some fruit of my labour. This supported me under the

various exercises I met with. The first of these was at Rotherham, where John Thorpe, one of our local preachers, had just separated from us. He declared open war against us, particularly opposing what he called "my perfection." Yet it pleased God to raise up many witnesses of it; many that loved Him with all their hearts; several of whom are burning and shining lights, and several removed into Abraham's bosom. Yea, it was observed, that some of his own hearers, even while he was preaching against salvation from sin, were fully convinced of the necessity of it; and indeed never rested more till they were happy witnesses of it.

24. In autumn I was desired to go to Boston. I did so, and preached in a field on a Sunday evening, with tolerable quietness. The next time I went, Mr. Alwood and I judged it would be best to be in the market-place. We began singing, when suddenly a large mob appeared, with a drum beating before them: meantime a great number of squibs were thrown among the people. Finding it was impossible to be heard, we purposed going to a friend's about a mile from the town. The moment we turned our backs, the dirt and stones flew like hail on every side. On the bridge, a man stopped us; but we broke from him, and went on, with the mob at our heels, throwing all that came to hand. Their number continually increasing, we thought it would be most advisable to face them, and try to get back to the town, where we had left our horses. My two companions immediately leaped over a wide ditch, which divided the field. But before I could follow them, one of the mob, coming behind me, struck up my heels, and gave me a violent fall. When I got up, my friends were out of sight, and the mob sur-

rounded me on every side. I knew not which way to go, neither indeed how to go at all, being exceedingly weak and spent, both with the fall and the many blows I had received. Being a little recovered, I tried to go through them, to a foot-bridge that was over the ditch. They forbore throwing till I drew near the bridge, and then all cried out, "Ditch him, ditch him." And just on the side of the ditch one struck up my heels again. Yet he stood by me, and let me rise up, and walk quietly over the bridge. There I was in the middle of the mob, and had a large field to go through, parted from the road by high rails, which had a broad ditch on either side. When I came to the rails, I knew not how to get over, my breath being almost spent; and, if I could, I saw no likelihood of escaping the being thrown into the ditch: however, they let me crawl over, without much hurt. But as soon as I was on the road, the same person who stopped us on the bridge collared me, to drag me to the horse-pond, while the rest plastered me over afresh with dirt. But just as we came to the pond, a gentleman called out to him that held me, "Let the man go." He immediately let go his hold, and I passed by the pond.

25. I had still to walk through the whole town, my horse being at the far end of it. When I came into the street, they got the dirt out of the kennels, and threw it in my face. As no door was open to take me in, I was obliged now and then to turn and face them, (otherwise they seldom looked me in the face,) in order to get breath. When I came into the market-place, there was a general shout for the glorious victory. Before I got to the inn, I was just ready to lie down, when one struck me violently, in order to strike up my heels. But I kept my feet, I

know not how; which I looked upon as a great mercy, as such a fall upon the stones might have done me much hurt. At the same time one threw a stone, which struck me on the temple. I then concluded, I must die in their hands. But, by the mercy of God, I was strangely brought through all the multitude, to the inn where I had alighted. Being sat down, my first thought was, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Indeed my mind (glory be to God!) was kept through the whole in perfect peace. By this time some of my friends, who had followed at a distance, were come in, and were washing my wound; when the mob came to the door, threatening what they would do to the house, if the landlord did not turn me out. He came in and said, "I cannot keep you here; for the mob will pull my house down." I told him, "Sir, I am in your house; but while I use it as an inn, it is mine. Turn me out at your peril. If you fear your house, apply to a magistrate for protection." He went to his landlord, who was a magistrate, and ordered him to take down the names of the chief rioters. After a while, I mounted my horse in the yard, and then, the gates being opened, rode through a shower of stones, and came safe to our friend's house. But I was so bruised, almost from head to foot, that when I was cold, I could hardly stir. And it was a full year before I quite recovered the hurts which I then received.

26. The next day I went back with a friend to the town. I soon found three of the rioters, to whom I could swear; but the rest were absconded. Hearing the justices were in the hall, we went thither without delay; and telling the clerk we had business with the court, we were speedily introduced. The

chairman, after we had made our complaint, roughly said, "You are the aggressor. And now you have the impudence to come to us, requiring justice against others!" I answered, "I am here. If I have broken any law, inflict the penalty upon me. But, in the mean time, I require you, in His Majesty's name, to do justice upon these rioters." After more threats, I was desired to call upon one of them at his own house, when the court was over. I did so, and he behaved exceedingly well, sending his sergeant for two of the rioters; one of whom brought his master to speak for him: but the justice told him plainly, "Either make it up with Mr. Mather, or I will send you to gaol directly." They both then asked pardon, promised good behaviour for the future, paid the expenses, and were dismissed. The third fled; but, a warrant being given, he was apprehended; but upon the same terms he was released.

27. I cannot but remark another thing which happened this year. Nottingham had at this time no regular preaching. I had a strong desire to make a trial there, and came thither in the afternoon. At Matthew Bagshaw's I found John Johnson, of York, who said, "I am glad you are come; for here is a poor man, who is to die to-morrow, whose behaviour is terrifying: he curses, swears, and threatens death to all that have given evidence against him; the jailer in particular. He will see no clergyman, but says he resolves to be a devil, that he may revenge himself. The minister has given me free leave to visit him. I went this morning; but he said, 'Give yourself no trouble about me. By this time to-morrow I shall be a devil, and then I will come and tear that villain in pieces.'" We immediately went

to prayer, and vehemently wrestled with God on his behalf. After prayer, we went to him, and at first sight observed an entire change in his behaviour. We inquired when this sudden change began, and found it was just while we were at prayer. But we had little opportunity of speaking to him, the minister (for whom he had sent) being just come: I could only say, as he passed by me heavily ironed, "Jesus Christ is both able and willing to strike off the heavier fetters of sin from your soul." He looked earnestly, but said nothing. We applied again to the throne of grace before and after the preaching; and likewise great part of the night. We went early in the morning, and he was brought to us in the parlour. We talked and prayed with him some time. After rising from prayer, he said to the jailer, "I now forgive and love you; and I hope, and pray, that you will forgive me." This was quickly noised about the town, which filled the yard with spectators, who crowded about the windows, which gave us an opportunity of speaking to them also. He now acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and was resigned to it, having a strong hope of finding mercy. We attended him into the yard, when his irons were knocked off, amidst a vast crowd, to whom we spake much on the occasion. Thence we accompanied him to the church, and afterwards to the cart, which stood at the gate, ready to receive him. But as he desired to walk between us, the sheriff gave him leave, and took much pains to keep off the crowd: at the end of the town, we sang part of that hymn,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!"

During the first three verses, he seemed lifted up;

but when we came to those words in the fourth verse,

“ His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood avail'd for *me*,”

he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. When we came to the place of execution, the minister prayed, and went away. The sheriff allowed us to pray with him again. And we committed his soul to God, in cheerful hope of meeting him again in Abraham's bosom.

28. In the year 1758, being stationed in Newcastle Circuit, (which then reached as far as Musselborough,) I made a visit to Brechin, in my way to which I was seized with the bloody flux. As soon as I got home, I took my room. I was not able to come down stairs for a month. My wife was quite a stranger at Newcastle ; but I could leave her and all things to God. I spoke freely to all who came to see me, not letting any escape out of my hands. Mr. Blair, the minister, came frequently ; and his son, a physician, visited me several times a day. It was now I discharged the clotted blood, which had lain in me ever since the riot at Boston. Yet I did not recover, till I prevailed on my mother to give me a large quantity of toast-and-water. The disorder was then presently stopped, and in a day or two I went down stairs.

29. The Sunday following, the sacrament was to be administered. I sent a line to Mr. Blair, and desired to be admitted to it, if it would not offend any of his parishioners. He immediately sent me a token, saying, “I will admit you, if they are all offended.” I went on Sunday, the first day I was abroad. The service lasted from nine in the morn-

ing to five in the evening; but I received no hurt. The next morning I breakfasted at Mr. Blair's, with the minister that assisted at the sacrament. They were sensible, candid men. Mr. Blair desired me to give them an account of the work of God in England. But when I mentioned the greatness of the work, and the fewness of the labourers, he said, "Among so great a number of people, there must be many men of learning: why does not Mr. Wesley send them out?" This led me to mention the prerequisites of a Methodist preacher; namely, 1. A knowledge of God, as his God, as having pardoned all his sins. 2. A life and conversation suitable thereto. 3. A clear conviction that he was called of God to the work; otherwise he could not bear the crosses attending it. 4. Some fruit of his labour, in convincing and converting of sinners. Mr. Blair broke out, "If these are the prerequisites of a Methodist preacher, they must not come here for them." I preached twice before I left Brechin, to a vast concourse of people; and afterwards at Montrose; but I know not that it had any lasting effect, unless the removing of prejudice.

30. In 1759 I was stationed in York Circuit, which then included Yarm, Scarborough, and Hull Circuits. In this year the work at Whitby began, and we had a great outpouring of the Spirit in many places. The next year I was in Staffordshire, where it pleased God to work in a very eminent manner; at Darlaston in particular, where there was a small but steady society of long standing. Several of these had borne much persecution, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Ever since, their behaviour has been unblamable: and yet none of them could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Some of these

coming over to the prayer-meetings at Wednesbury, and hearing (what they thought they had never heard before) that they were to believe now ; that they might come to Christ now, without any other qualification than a sense of their own sinfulness and helplessness ; they were utterly astonished, and began to be amazed at their slowness of heart. Presently a prayer-meeting was set up at Darlaston. And in a little time many souls were set at liberty. The oldest stood out longest. After all they had done and suffered, they found it hard to come, as having done nothing. And when they were urged to it in a class or prayer meeting, they were ready to gnash with their teeth. But whether they would hear or forbear, God continued to add more and more souls to His genuine Gospel. Nothing stood before it. Many of the servants and children of these old professors cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" Being pointed to the Lamb of God, they believed, and rejoiced in God their Saviour, to the utter astonishment of their unbelieving masters and parents. In one night it was common to see five or six (and sometimes more) praising God for His pardoning mercy. And not a few in Birmingham, Dudley, and Wolverhampton, as well as in Wednesbury and Darlaston, clearly testified, that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all sin.

31. Meantime the societies increased greatly. In Darlaston we purchased ground, and built a preaching-house ; and in Birmingham we hired a large building. Satan was alarmed at this, and stirred up outward persecution, both at Birmingham and Wolverhampton. But it did us no hurt. Our brethren went on, not counting their lives dear unto themselves. He then made the minds of some

of the old Methodists evil affected towards their brethren. They began to speak much evil, particularly in their classes, of them and of this new doctrine. And any defect in these new converts (as they called them) was magnified to the utmost; and then brought as an undeniable proof that the whole matter was wrong. These were earnestly supported by Mr. J——s, formerly an itinerant, now a local preacher. To him they sent every tale that malice could invent, either against the work, or the instruments employed therein, my wife in particular; whom, indeed, God had been pleased to make eminently useful. This embarrassed me a little: however, we went on, and the work did not suffer much, till about the time of the Conference, when some of the preachers, going through the Circuit, and hearing only one side, (though they might have heard both, as I was present,) both privately encouraged the opposition, and in their public discourses, dividing the people into the new and old believers, used many unkind expressions, to encourage the old and discourage the new believers, as they called them. This went hard with one that was not an old preacher, this being but the fourth year of my preaching, and the first of my acting as an assistant. However, by the grace of God, far less hurt was done than might reasonably have been expected.

32. As I wrote to you the most minute circumstances of the work, and you were there in the very height of it, you judged it best to place me in the Circuit another year. But I made a false step in the beginning of it. Longing for peace, and preferring the judgment of other men to my own, I agreed that my wife should not hold any more

prayer-meetings. Immediately the work began to decay, both as to its swiftness and extensiveness. And though I continued to insist as strongly as ever upon the same points, yet there was not the same effect, for want of seconding by prayer-meetings the blow which was given in preaching. Mr. Westell laboured with me this year. We constantly attended Stroud and Painswick: at both places there was a large increase; as also in several other parts of the Circuit, which then included Coventry and Shrewsbury.

33. After having been married near ten years, I had this year a son. May he prove a blessing to many, and a comfort to his parents! In May and June you desired me to visit Wales, and regulate the societies there. They were all then supplied by Mr. Taylor, who was exceedingly useful among them. But the people in general were difficult to get, and more so to keep, in society. In many places, however, they joined together; and not a few of them remain to this day.

34. In 1763 God revived His work in the Staffordshire Circuit, especially at Birmingham; notwithstanding the disturbance which we constantly had during the preaching, and the danger of being murdered by the mob, when we came out of the house. No magistrate could quell the rioters; or rather, I should say, none would. For it is certain, any magistrate has power to preserve the peace, if he will. But at length Mr. Wortly Birch took them in hand: he laid some of the rioters in the dungeon, and left them there a night or two to cool. He fined the rest according to law; obliged them to pay the money down, and gave it to the poor. By this means their stout spirits were humbled, and we

have had peace ever since. This year a preaching-house was built at Stroud; and another at Wolverhampton. But this was not long-lived; for soon after the mob assembled, and pulled it down to the ground.

35. They had reigned here for a long time, inso-much that it was difficult for a Methodist to pass the streets. And now one could hardly appear in them, but at the hazard of his life. The rioters had broken most of their windows, and swore they would pull down their houses, and every preaching-house near. Hearing of this at Stroud, I rode over immediately, and found the whole country in terror, as they expected every night the mob from Wolverhampton, to pull down the preaching-houses at Dudley, Darlaston, and Wednesbury, with the houses of the Methodists. They came first to Darlaston, a place long famous for rioting, hoping to meet with good encouragement. But a hog-butcher, who lived near the house, hearing the alarm, leaped out of bed, seized his cleaver, and running out, swore death to the first that meddled with it. So unexpected a reception quite discouraged them, and made them run away faster than they came. Here we saw the good effect which the late revival had upon the town in general. There were few left who would either persecute themselves, or suffer others to do it.

36. But Wolverhampton itself was still in a flame. A friend who was to accompany me to the town had procured a pair of pocket-pistols, and offered me one. But I told him, "No; I am in God's work, and trust to His protection. And you must return your pistols, or I cannot accept of your company." He did so. When I came to the end of the town, the alarm was quickly spread. So that before we came

into the main street, we had company enough. But they were restrained, so that we received little abuse, further than bad language. I immediately went to the justice, who granted a warrant; but the constable gave notice of it to the rioters, so that none was taken: some fled; some hid themselves; the rest set justice at defiance. This occasioned several neighbouring justices to fix a day for meeting in the town. When they met, several of the rioters were brought before them. Three were bound over to appear at Stafford, where all the magistrates gave attendance. The proof against the rioters was full: yet the honourable jury acquitted them all!

37. This gave them fresh spirits: so they hasted home with ribbons flying, and were saluted with bells and bonfires, in one of which they burned me and my friend in effigy. Our friends now found it more dangerous than ever to come into the town, or get to their houses. Before I left Stafford, I waited on Lord D——, with Mr. Hayes, attorney, the person who prepared the mob, and himself made the first breach in the house. I told him plain, "Either let Mr. Hayes rebuild the house, or we will try him for his life." He promised it should be rebuilt in such a time; and it was built accordingly. So did God deliver us out of this complicated trouble. And all the time His work prospered.

38. But what could not be done by persecution has been done by those who brought in a new doctrine among us. This soon checked, and has now well nigh destroyed, both the root and branch of vital religion. They who receive this new light, not only despise and speak evil of those that begat them to God, but even deny the reality of that unspeakable blessing which they then received.

They say, "We were then blind, and knew nothing." Happy ignorance! which enabled them to endure reproach, pain, want; yea, to carry their lives in their hands, counting nothing dear, but to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

39. In August, 1770, I was stationed in Bristol Circuit. Here I met with various exercises. But I was more than conqueror, and good was done in Bristol, and in several other places; particularly at Bath, where they were obliged first to enlarge, and then to gallery, the preaching-house. In the spring I was called to Monmouth, to open a preaching-house, which was duly licensed. We preached with tolerable quietness till Sunday evening. The churchwardens then came before me, went in, and shut the doors. Meantime the street was all in an uproar: I went on with Mrs. Hern and Miss Fortune, (my only companions,) till we met the mob, who opened to the right and left, and let us pass to the door. It was shut, but in a while I prevailed to have it opened. And one of them asked, what authority I had to preach. I asked, who he was. He said, "The churchwarden." "Then you have no authority to question me. I shall not show mine, but to a proper person. And I desire you will either behave well, or withdraw." Another said, "Sir, will you show it me? I am the chief constable." I answered, "Sir, I will." While he was reading, the churchwarden looked over him, and said, "O sir, this will not do." I said, "Sir, it will do for me; and I require all of you who stay, to behave in a becoming manner." The chief constable then withdrew; but the crowd was so great, that they could not half get in. And those without

were so noisy, that nothing could be heard. So after a time I judged it best to withdraw.

40. In the evening the mayor sent desiring me to attend him in the morning at the Town Hall. I went. Soon after came the mayor, the clerk of the peace, and all the chief men of the town. The rector and curate used some harsh words. The other gentlemen behaved civilly. But they asked so many questions, and spoke so many at a time, it was impossible to answer. I said, "Gentlemen, be pleased to speak one at a time." But this could not be done. Only they all agreed in desiring me to promise, that I would come no more. I told them, I would make no such promise; no, not if my life depended upon it. So we parted as we met, and the next day I got safe to Bristol.

41. In 1773 I was stationed at Canterbury. During my stay in this Circuit we had a fair prospect of doing good at Gravesend. The congregations were large, and not a few appeared to be much affected. The society increased, and all things were in a flourishing condition, till a poor creature, one George Gould, appeared, who at first came as one of our friends. But no sooner had he gained the affections of the people, than he pulled off the mask, and preached Calvinism. And hereby such a wound was given to the society, as is not healed to this day.

42. In the year 1777 I was appointed for the Colne Circuit. It was not long before, that the gallery in the preaching-house, being full of people, had fallen flat to the ground. And though no one was killed, yet some limbs were broken, and many poor people bruised. This obliged me to travel through many societies, in order to defray those large expenses, of

taking care of those that were hurt, and rebuilding the gallery, as well as building and furnishing a house for the preacher. But whatever fatigue I had was abundantly made up by the kindness and liberality of our brethren.

43. Having prepared the materials for the preaching-house at Padiham, the next year, on the 1st of October we laid the foundation. But a person pretending a claim to the ground, when the wall was about a yard high, threw a part of it down. We bore this outrage, and proceeded in the work. This emboldened him to engage three masons, who came in the night, when the roof was on, wrested out the sides of both doors with the lintels, with a yard of the wall above. They broke the sides of the two large windows, near three feet on each side; they then made a large hole in the pillar between the two windows, intending to throw down the house. But suddenly such a panic seized them, that first one and then the other stopped short and ran away. These returned no more. But their employer, with the third man, resolved to finish their work. Presently he was himself struck with a fear of being killed, and ran away, dragging his fellow with him.

44. Being averse to law, we bore this also: but we set a watch on the house every night, till it was covered in and licensed, in hopes we should then be quiet. But on December the 21st he brought two men at eleven in the forenoon, with a pickaxe and a crow, and directed them to begin at one of the doors, which was not quite repaired. The workmen stood amazed: but several of the townsmen quickly came to the place, two of whom were remarkably weak men, and one of them lame besides. One laid hold of the pickaxe, and one on the crow. They that held

them were stout men, the terror of the country. Many took part on each side. I was in my room, and at first thought not to stir out. But fearing mischief might be done, I sent for a constable, and myself walked to the chapel. The young man was struggling with him that held the pickaxe, to whom I spoke, and he promised to be quiet. Meantime some took the crow from the other man, which their employer observing, struck a lad that helped them. He returned the blow. A battle ensued, wherein the gentleman was worsted, and rolled in the dirt.

45. Finding there was no other way, I procured a warrant from Serjeant Aspinwall, for the chief rioters. This was served immediately. The next morning we waited upon him, at his house, and he bound them all over to the assizes. But I recollecting that Mr. W——n had said before the serjeant, he was willing to refer the whole affair to him, I sent him word, I was willing too; and desired him to name the time and place. But he would do neither. After preaching at Millend in the evening, I went to bed; but my sleep departed from me. However, I rose as usual; but before I went out of my room, I heard a knocking at the door. It was one from Padiham, who mournfully cried out, "O sir, we are all ruined! Mr. W——n has got a warrant for seven-and-twenty of us, and you are the first in it. We must all be at the serjeant's by noon." I told him, I would be there. As soon as I came, I saw Mr. W——n just going into the yard. I followed him close, to the great joy of my friends. We were near forty in number. The serjeant coming to the door, I asked why I was summoned. He answered, "For a riot." I said, "Sir, you cannot but know that Mr. W. has done this out of mere litigiousness.

But why should we trouble the whole country with our affairs? Cannot we settle it between ourselves?" To this Mr. W. agreed. So, as we had no bonds of arbitration ready, we both signed a memorandum to the same effect. The poor people then went home in peace. After some difficulties the bonds were signed; and after hearing all parties, the serjeant's sentence was, (1.) That the ground (part of which we had purchased) should be equally divided between us and Mr. W.; and, (2.) That he should pay us five pounds for the damage which he had done. Thus we were at length delivered out of our trouble, and peace re-established at Padiham.

46. What I may meet with hereafter, I know not: I can only say, I find it in my heart to spend and be spent for God, in promoting His glory and the salvation of men. To that end I am determined still to preach the whole Methodist doctrine, and to see that the discipline, to which God has led us, be executed in all its branches. I see more and more, that where it is not executed, little lasting good is done. I know this is not the way of ease, nor the way to popularity. But as I set out without a view to either, so I hope to continue, by the grace of God.

I remain

Your affectionate and dutiful son in the Gospel,
ALEXANDER MATHER.

AFTER reading and considering the foregoing account, I observed to Mr. Mather, that he had wholly omitted one considerable branch of his experi-

ence, touching what is properly termed "the great salvation." He wrote me a full and particular answer, the substance of which I have subjoined.

"I ANSWER, 1. With regard to the time and place, it was at Rotherham, in the year 1757, that I enjoyed it in a far larger degree than I ever did before, or do now. And although my situation the next year laid many hindrances in the way, yet I both preached it plainly, and strongly encouraged those that had before experienced it, and such as professed to receive it at that time, either at Sunderland or elsewhere. This I continued to do in 1759 and 1760: in which time many were made partakers of it, in York, at and near Pocklington, in Hull, and various other places. It was the enjoyment of this which supported me in the trials I met with at Wednesbury in the two following years; during which, many were added to the witnesses of it in Birmingham, Dudley, Darlaston, Wolverhampton, and Wednesbury. It was my own experience which emboldened me to assert it, even where it was opposed by our chief members, partly because of the faults of some that professed it; but chiefly because of the natural enmity of their hearts to God.

"What I had experienced in my own soul was an instantaneous deliverance from all those wrong tempers and affections which I had long and sensibly groaned under; an entire disengagement from every creature, with an entire devotedness to God: and from that moment, I found an unspeakable pleasure in doing the will of God in all things. I had also a power to do it, and the constant approbation both of my own conscience and of God. I had simplicity of heart, and a single eye to God, at all

times and in all places ; with such a fervent zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls, as swallowed up every other care and consideration. Above all, I had uninterrupted communion with God, whether sleeping or waking. O that it were with me, as when the candle of the Lord thus shone upon my head ! While I call it to mind, my soul begins to wing its way toward that immediate enjoyment of God. May it never be retarded, but press into the glorious liberty, which is equally free for all the sons of God.

“ As to the manner wherein this work was wrought, 1. After I was clearly justified, I was soon made sensible of my want of it. For although I was enabled to be very circumspect, and had a continual power over outward and inward sin, yet I felt in me what I knew was contrary to the mind which was in Christ, and what hindered me from enjoying and glorifying Him as I saw it was the privilege of a child of God to do. And such I knew myself to be, both from the fruit and the witness of His Spirit ; which I felt in a strong degree, supporting me in conflicts of a very close and particular nature. 2. My conviction of the need of a farther change was abundantly increased by the searching preaching of Mr. Walsh, of blessed memory. This kept my conscience very tender, even to a degree of scrupulosity ; and helped me to be much in private prayer, and kept me watching thereunto. 3. When I saw my call to preach, the difficulties attending that office showed me more and more the need of such a change, that I might bear all things : and by searching the Scriptures, I saw the possibility of it more clearly, and was stirred up to seek it more earnestly. 4. When I began travelling, I had no end,

aim, or design, but to spend and be spent for God ; not counting my life or any thing dear, so I might finish my course with joy ; which indeed I expected would be very short, as 'I dealt my life at every blow.' I saw as clearly as I do now, that nothing furthers that end so much as a heart and life wholly devoted to God.

"This made me neglect the advantage I had in my youth of a tolerable acquaintance with Latin, which I could easily have recovered : but this and every other gain I counted but loss, that I might win that intimacy with God, which I still think to be the life of preaching. Therefore I husbanded all the time that I could save from company, eating, or sleeping, to lay out in wrestling with God for myself and the flock : so I devoted to God some part of every leisure hour, over and above the hour from eleven to twelve in the forenoon, and from four to five in the afternoon. Herein I was sweetly drawn after God, and had many and large views of that salvation which I wanted, and which He had provided in His Son. The exceeding great and precious promises were clearly opened to me ; and having a full assurance of the power and faithfulness of the Promiser, my soul often tasted of their sweetness. And though unbelief prevented my immediate possession, yet I had a blessed foretaste of them. This made me desire full enjoyment more and more. I abhorred whatever seemed to keep me from it. I sought out every obstruction. I was willing to offer up every Isaac, and inflamed with great ardour in wrestling with God ; determined not to let Him go, till He emptied me of all sin, and filled me with Himself.

"This I believe He did, when I ventured upon

Jesus as sufficient to save to the uttermost. He wrought in me what I cannot express, what I judge it is impossible to utter. Yet I was not long without reasoning; not concerning the work,—of this I was absolutely sure; but whether such and such things as I soon discovered in myself were consistent with it. And this had its use, as it qualified me to advise others, who, though saved from sin, were tried in the same way.

“Upon this head I consulted Mr. Walsh, and his advice helped me in some degree; but God helped me much more in private prayer. Herein I was clearly satisfied, 1. That deliverance from sin does not imply deliverance from human infirmities. 2. That neither is it inconsistent with feeling our natural appetites, or with the regular gratification of them. And, 3. That salvation from sin is not inconsistent with temptations of various kinds. And all this you have clearly and fully declared in the ‘Plain Account of Christian Perfection.’

“I have only to observe, that while my soul was following hard after God, I had frequent temptations to resume my Latin, and learn the other languages; especially when I observed some of my brethren who had made some progress therein, though they had not the same advantages with me. But the comfort I found in spending all my time as above, and the thought, that however this might recommend them to some hearers, yet they were not hereby more instrumental than before, either in awakening, converting, or building up souls, made me quite easy about it. This I have considered as the only business and peculiar glory of a Methodist preacher. Not that I think our brethren who have made this progress have not been useful in all these respects;

but I think they are not more useful than they were when they were strangers to these things. And I doubt whether they are so useful as they might have been, had they employed the same time, the same diligence, and the same intenseness of thought, in the several branches of that work for which they willingly gave up all. For my own part, I want to feel the same principle ever actuating me, which I felt the moment I set out.

“Upon the whole, I find abundant cause to praise God, for the support He has given me under various trials, and the wonderful deliverance from them. I praise Him for so preserving me from impatience in them, that the enemy had no room to speak reproachfully. In all, He has given me free access to the throne of grace; often with a strong confidence of deliverance. I bless God, that the trials I have met with, even from my brethren, have never given me an inclination to decline the work; nor, for any time together, to be less active in any branch of it. I always considered, I had nothing which I had not received; and that the design of the Giver was, that all should be used with singleness of heart, to please God and not man. I praise Him, that though some of the affairs I have been engaged in, being quite new to me, so deeply employed my thought as sometimes to divert me from that degree of communion with God in which is my only happiness, and without which my soul can never be at rest; yet He gives me always to see, that the fulness of the promise is every Christian’s privilege; and that this and every branch of salvation is to be received now, by faith alone. And it can only be retained by the same means, by believing every moment. We cannot rest on anything that has been done, or that

may be done hereafter. This would keep us from living a life of faith; which I conceive to be no other, than the now deriving virtue from Jesus, by which we enjoy and live to God. My soul is often on the stretch for the full enjoyment of this without interruption; nor can I discharge my conscience, without urging it upon all believers, now to come unto Him 'who is able to save unto the uttermost!'"

CITY-ROAD, LONDON, *January 5th*, 1780.

I EARNESTLY desire, that all our preachers would seriously consider the preceding account. And let them not be content, never to speak against the great salvation, either in public or private; and never to discourage either by word or deed any that think they have attained it: no; but prudently encourage them to "hold fast whereunto they have attained;" and strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to "go on to perfection;" yea, to expect full salvation from sin every moment, by mere grace, through simple faith.

JOHN WESLEY.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF MR. MATHER.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH BENSON.

THE following sketch of Mr. Mather's character and death is extracted from his funeral sermon, which was preached and published by Mr. Benson, in the year 1800:—

As the account which Mr. Mather gave of himself twenty years ago, contained in the third volume of

the Magazine, published in 1780, undoubtedly is in the hands of many of you, it will not be necessary that I should say much concerning the former part of his life. It will be sufficient to observe two or three particulars, for the information of such as have not seen that account. He was born, he tells us, at Brechin, in Scotland, in February, 1733. His parents making it their care to instruct him early in the principles of religion, and to bring him up in the fear of God, he was preserved in a great measure, while young, from those follies and vices which children too generally fall into, and took pleasure in reading good books, and in other exercises of religion. And when about ten years of age, while the master of the school he attended was praying with his scholars, he received those good impressions which he says he never entirely lost: a lesson this to all parents and schoolmasters, to use all diligence in endeavouring to sow those seeds of grace in the minds of their children and pupils, which, through the Divine blessing, may afterwards grow up and produce a plenteous harvest.

Mr. Mather in his youth was sundry times exposed to great and imminent dangers, in which, through the kind providence of God, he was most mercifully preserved. When about twenty years of age, he came to London, where in February, 1753, he was married to a countrywoman, with whom he had been acquainted in his childhood; and, in September following, was hired to a gentleman who carried on the baking business. Here he found, what, he says, he had long desired, a family in which God was worshipped. This excited him to greater earnestness in seeking Him, and to greater exactness in the use of prayer, and every other means of grace. And so

much in earnest was he in this pursuit, that he sometimes continued on his knees from the time he should have gone to rest till two in the morning, when he was called to go to work.

Nevertheless, he did not for some time obtain either peace with God, or peace of mind, which he imputed to his being frequently employed in baking on the Lord's day. But in consequence of remonstrances on the subject, and proper steps being taken, this practice was soon given up by that family, and he, being induced to hear the word at the Foundery, was much edified, and soon made acquainted with, and enabled to embrace, the way of salvation through faith in Christ. This, as I have observed, was under a sermon of Mr. Wesley, on Easter-day, in 1754. His confidence, indeed, at first was not established, for he was soon assaulted with unbelief; but being exhorted to look to Jesus, and to confide in Him, as giving Himself for him, as all should do who are in a similar situation, he soon recovered his peace, which, he says, by the mercy of God, he had not lost thirty years after; and, I believe, did not lose to his dying day. It was not long before he began to find strong impressions upon his mind, that he was called to preach; which, after he had earnestly sought direction from God concerning it in fasting and prayer, he ventured to mention to those that met in band with him. They very properly joined with him in the same religious exercises, and afterwards urged him to consult Mr. Wesley on the subject; who advised him to continue to seek direction in a patient and persevering use of the same means of grace, and gave him reason to hope that God would soon make his way plain before him.

Soon after this, Mr. Wesley, to lead him on step

by step, appointed him a leader of a band; and in a little time, a leader of a class; and God blessed him in both these offices. Nevertheless, his conviction that he must preach continued; nay, grew stronger and stronger; so that he was constrained to go to Mr. Wesley again, and open his mind to him. Mr. Wesley now thought proper to set before him the difficulties of the work, "that to be a Methodist preacher was not the way to ease, honour, pleasure, or emolument; that it was a life of much labour and reproach; that they often fared hard, were often in want, were liable to be stoned, beaten, and abused in various manners." He advised him to consider this before he engaged in so uncomfortable a way of life. Mr. Mather replied, that "he had no desire to engage therein, unless it were the call of God; and that he did not regard what he suffered in doing the will of God." Would to God that all who take upon them the sacred office of speaking in the name of Christ were of this spirit! Mr. Wesley then appointed him to make trial a few times. Being approved of, he was soon employed as a local preacher, more than his strength could well bear. It seems he laboured between two and three years in this way, following his business day by day, and taking from sleep the time employed in study and preaching; so that frequently, he says, he had not eight hours' sleep in a week. By this means, together with constant abstemiousness and fasting, he was brought so low in body as hardly to be able to follow his business, and his master was very apprehensive his weakness would terminate in death. However, God supported him; and in August, 1757, which is forty-three years ago, he was received as a travelling preacher, and with Thomas Hanby,

Thomas Tobias, and Thomas Lee, was sent into the Epworth Circuit, which then included Gainsborough, Grimsby, Barrow, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, and divers other Circuits. Here it pleased God to give him much of His presence in his own soul, and to let him see some fruit of his labour.

Since that time till last spring, when, by excessive weakness he was obliged to desist, he has been constantly employed as a travelling preacher in the Methodist Connexion; has laboured in most Circuits in the kingdom; has been peculiarly well received, and, I believe I may say, very useful in them all. In labours, you all know, he has been abundant; and, as he laboured in dependence on Divine grace, and with a single eye to the glory of God, He who sent him did not suffer him to labour in vain, but gave him many seals to his ministry. Many, I am persuaded, were awakened, many justified, and believers in general edified, by his ministry, wherever he came. What sort of a preacher he was, you in general well know, having heard him frequently, not only during the last two years, in which he has had the care of this Circuit, but many of you twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago, when also he laboured in London, as you have likewise, since that time, often heard him occasionally. So that it is not necessary I should give you any character of him in this respect. You will generally allow, I think, that he had very clear and just views of the truth as it is in Jesus, in all its branches; and that his preaching was peculiarly instructive, and very forcible and impressive. He was never at a loss for abundance and variety of edifying matter; and, had he had the aid of a classical education, his discourses, through a better arrangement, would have appeared to much

more advantage. His apprehension was peculiarly quick, his genius fertile, and his memory tenacious. Being naturally a man of strong passions, and Divine grace having softened and humbled his heart, he generally felt himself the truths he delivered to others, and, in consequence thereof, his hearers felt them too.

Indeed he had a feeling heart in every sense, especially towards persons in want and affliction; with whom he always sympathized, whom he was always ready to relieve according to his ability, and for the relief of whom he was often entrusted with considerable sums of money by some friends who were rich and benevolent, and whose almoner he was. He was a man of strict integrity, of exemplary conduct, and of great zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. This made him instant, in season and out of season, in his endeavours to spread the Gospel of Christ, which he well knew to be the grand means God hath made choice of both to save mankind, and to advance His own glory. Nor did he confine his efforts for this purpose to the pulpit; but in private conversation, and in all companies where it could with propriety be done, he laboured to diffuse the odour of the knowledge of God, and of the truths of His precious word. I have known few persons more careful than he was, to improve conversation to the edification of those present; or more apt to teach, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. And as his life was consistent with his teaching, and he was "an example to believers in word, in behaviour, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity," what he advanced was generally well received, and attended with a blessing.

As the work of God in general was dear to him, so especially the welfare of the Methodist Connexion. This, with the doctrine and discipline thereof, lay very near his heart indeed; and when, at any time or place, matters wore a gloomy aspect, and circumstances arose which seemed to militate against the safety or prosperity of our cause, it touched him to the quick, and he was very prone to yield to excessive grief. And this, perhaps, was his great failing: for that he had failings I do not deny; for I do not deny that he was man. His grief on these occasions sometimes wore the appearance of, and was mistaken for, anger; and perhaps I may allow that, in a sense, it was anger, even anger similar to that which He felt who, we are informed, "looked round about on the multitude with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." During these thirty years that I have known him I never knew anything affect him so deeply, as what he thought touched the cause of God, and affected the welfare of the Methodist Connexion.

But I shall tire out your patience. One thing more it seems of importance I should observe before I give you an account of his last sickness and death. When he was labouring at Rotherham, in the year 1757, he tells us the Lord greatly deepened His work in his soul. He was delivered from those wrong tempers and affections which he had long and sensibly groaned under. He felt an entire disengagedness from every creature, with an entire devotedness to God; and from that moment found unspeakable pleasure in doing the will of God in all things, having also power to do it. And as he had the approbation of his own conscience, so he believed also he had the approbation of God. His heart

then was undivided, and his eye single to the glory of God at all times and in all places ; and he was inspired with that fervent zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls, which swallowed up every other care and consideration. And, above all, he had, he says, uninterrupted communion with God sleeping and waking. He seems to have retained this close union with Christ, and conformity to Him, for some time, but by no means till he wrote the account ; which, as I said, was in the year 1780. I suppose, however, he frequently enjoyed it, and that it was his chief support under the many trials he met with from affliction and pain, from mobs, by scoffs and insults, by dirt, stones, and brickbats, with which he was sometimes attacked when about his Master's work ; from false brethren, and from seeing the word of God hindered, and the societies and congregations divided and scattered, through strife and contention.

Speaking on this subject, he says, " I find abundant cause to praise God for the support He has given me, under various trials, and the wonderful deliverance He has granted me from them. I praise Him, for so preserving me from impatience in them, that the enemy has had no room to speak reproachfully. In all He has given me free access to the throne of grace ; often with strong confidence of deliverance. I bless God that the trials I have met with, even from my brethren, have never given me an inclination to decline the work ; nor for any time together to be less active in it. I always considered I had nothing which I had not received, and that the design of the Giver was, that all should be used with singleness of heart to please God and not man. I praise Him, that though some of the affairs I have

been engaged in, being quite new to me, have so deeply employed my thoughts, as sometimes to divert me from that degree of communion with God in which is my only happiness, and without which my soul can never be at rest; yet He gives me always to see, that the fulness of the promise is every Christian's privilege, and that this and every other branch of salvation is to be received now by faith."

Such were his views, desires, and resolutions twenty years ago; and I believe they were not materially altered after that time. What his spirit and conduct were of late, many of you know better than I. He has been your minister, and the superintendent of the societies in this city and neighbourhood, these two last years; and you have had frequent opportunities of observing how he conducted himself, and, which is the chief evidence of the power of grace, with what degree of patience and resignation he supported the tedious, complicated, and painful affliction wherewith it pleased God to exercise and perfect him. For it was necessary that he, like his Master, should be perfected through sufferings. His sufferings, indeed, for some years, have occasionally been great; but for six or eight months nearly uninterrupted. At the time I last saw him, the time referred to before, his affliction was great indeed. And what I was then a witness to I shall never forget. The moment his dear friend Mr. Pawson and I entered the room, his pale face, his emaciated body, and his death-like appearance, struck and affected us exceedingly, and for some minutes we both remained silent, and wept. At length he attempted to address us; and with a low whisper, not being able to speak above his breath, he said, "Through the mercy of God I have

got hither by a miracle : but why I am here, I know not ; for I seem to be of no use." I said, " You are here that you may be an example of patience, by suffering the will of God, as you have long been of diligence in doing it. And doubtless you find this a harder duty than the other." " Indeed I do," said he ; " but I find the grace of God sufficient for this also." He then expressed himself in the most clear, pertinent, and feeling manner, concerning our redemption by Christ, as I have mentioned above, and of his whole dependence being on this alone, and not on anything he had done or suffered for salvation. We were both much affected while he discoursed on this subject. After this he spoke concerning the Methodist Connexion in a way which showed how much his soul was wrapped up in the prosperity of it ; and gave us many cautions and advices, urging us especially to attend, at the Conference, to the state of the poor preachers, many of whom, he said, he knew to be in great want and distress. After he had quite spent himself with speaking to us on these and some other subjects, we kneeled down to pray, as we had reason to believe, for the last time. But we could not speak much. We could do little more than weep in silence, and gave vent to our tears and sighs. We then bade him farewell. Mr. Pawson, indeed, might intend to see him the next day ; but I took my leave of him, not expecting to see him again, as it has happened, till the resurrection of the just.

He continued to be patient and resigned, as he had been all along from the first attack of his disorder, and retained his confidence in God, and his hope of everlasting life, to the very last ; exemplifying, in a glorious manner, in his experience and

behaviour, the following well-known and striking description of a triumphant death:—

“Through nature’s wreck, through vanquish’d agonies,
(Like the stars struggling through the midnight gloom,)
What gleams of joy! what more than human peace!
Where the frail mortal,—the poor abject worm?
No, not in death the mortal to be found!
His conduct is a legacy for all,
Richer than Mammon’s for his single heir.
His comforters he comforts: great in ruin,
With unreluctant grandeur, gives, not yields,
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.”

On Saturday night, August 16th, speaking to his much-esteemed friend, Mr. Robert Spence, of York, he said, “What I told you upon your first visiting me after my arrival at York, I still feel to be a truth, namely, that I have nowhere to look, nor anything else to depend upon for salvation, but Christ; and my confidence in Him is firm as a rock. My faith has frequently been assaulted during my affliction, in an unusual manner, but it has never shrunk in the least degree: I feel a blessed evidence of my acceptance, and a sacred sense of God’s presence being with me always. How comfortable are these words, ‘Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out!’ ‘God so loved us, that He gave His only Son’ to be the propitiation for us. There is no other name, no other Redeemer; on Him my soul relies. Mine is a hope of more than forty years: it cannot easily be shaken.”

On Monday, the 18th, being in extreme anguish, he said, “I long to be gone, I long to be gone;” and desired me to pray for his dismissal. After rising from my knees, I said, that this could only be asked with submission. He sweetly and reverently

answered, "With great submission; with great submission." After pausing awhile, he said, "I am happy in Jesus, but my sufferings are very great;" and added,—

" ' Rivers of life Divine I see,
And trees of paradise.'

O, let me be there :—I'll be there, there, there! O that it might be this night! O, hide me among these trees! Here may I have an abiding place!

'Tis there, with the lambs of Thy flock,
There only I covet to rest.'

But if I may not have the privilege, the happiness, the honour of being with Thee this night, may I be resigned to Thy will. O that exercise of praise and thanksgiving! It has been the delight of my soul, my chief exercise on earth. I have loved Thy word, Thy law, Thy people, and I still love them.

' Let it not my Lord displease,
That I would die to be His guest.'

Jesus answers, 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee. Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away.' Jesus has made me all fair." Again, when labouring under the most extreme pain, anguish, and anxiety, (for his complicated afflictions racked his body with the most torturing sufferings, and bowed down his formerly strong spirits with the heaviest depression,) he most affectingly cried out, "O God, my heart is broken within me. Why are Thy chariot-wheels so long in coming? Lord, grant me patience;" and then, as though his prayers were immediately answered, he calmly said,—

" To patient faith the prize is sure,
And they that to the end endure
The cross, shall wear the crown."

On Wednesday morning, the 20th, after a night of inexpressible suffering, he was composed, and slumbered a little. When he awoke he seemed surprised to find himself still in the body, and said, "Why did you call me back? I have been in paradise. As surely as I shall go there again, I have been in heaven this morning." Then, after taking leave of, and giving his dying advice to, the family, he turned to Mrs. Mather, and said, "As for you, my dear, I can say nothing to you that I have not already said; but" (pointing to the Bible) "that book is yours, and the Author of it." On this night, amongst many other heavenly breathings, I observed him to say, "O Jesus, whom I have loved, whom I do love, in whom I delight, I surrender myself unto Thee." This was a night of peculiar affliction, which he bore with the utmost degree of Christian patience.

On Friday, the 22d, about two hours before his departure, and nearly the last words he uttered, he was heard to say, "I now know that I have not sought Thee in vain; I have not,—I have not,—I have not." And then, "O Thou that causedst light to shine out of darkness, shine upon my soul with the light of the knowledge of the Son of God. That name above every other name for ever dear, it dispels all my fears. O, proclaim, proclaim, Jesus! Tell me, shall I be with Him this night?" On being answered, "Yes, there is no doubt of it," he cried out, "He that I have served for near fifty years will not forsake me now. Glory be to God and the Lamb, for ever and ever! Amen! amen! amen!"

Soon after this his voice failing, he spoke very little audibly; but, by the motion of his lips, appeared engaged in silent ejaculations, till seeming to fall

into a sweet slumber, he silently, and almost imperceptibly, breathed his soul into the arms of his loved and adored Redeemer, about four o'clock in the afternoon.

And now, my brethren, is not this most animating? Methinks, had we been present at such a close of such a life by such a man, we should have felt a little of the ardour described in the lines immediately following those above quoted :—

“ How our hearts burn'd within us at the scene !
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man ?
His God sustains him in his final hour !
His final hour brings glory to his God !
Man's glory Heaven vouchsafes to call her own.
We gaze, we weep mix'd tears of grief and joy !
Amazement strikes! Devotion bursts to flame !
Christians adore! and infidels believe.”

Thus lived, and thus died, Alexander Mather ; than whom, perhaps, no person has been more universally respected among us, as an intelligent and judicious man, a pious and exemplary Christian, a sympathizing and steady friend, and a faithful, diligent labourer in the Lord's vineyard. What was said of Demetrius by St. John, (as some of you heard from Mr. Bradburn this morning,) was indeed very applicable to him :—“ He had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself.” May we, whether preachers or people, follow him as he followed Christ ! Considering the end of his conversation, and how the Lord supported him in his last moments, may we imitate his faith and patience, and persevere in our endeavours to aid the good cause, which he so long laboured to support and help forward in the earth : the cause which the apostles, the evangelists, the saints, and the martyrs of former ages, had so much

at heart ; which the Son of God Himself came from heaven to promote, and for which He did not think it too much to give His life. We ourselves, also, let us remember, are ready to be offered ; and the time of our departure is likewise at hand. Let us, like our departed friend, make it our chief care to “fight the good fight, to finish our course, and keep the faith ;” that for us also, through the same Redeemer, and in consequence of redemption in Him, there may be laid up “a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, may give us in that day ; and not to us only, but to all that love His appearing.” Amen ! amen !

A FURTHER ACCOUNT OF THE LATE MR. ALEXANDER MATHER.

BY MR. JOHN PAWSON.

“THE memory of the just,” says Solomon, “is blessed ;” and the holy psalmist assures us, “The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.” Agreeably to this, the apostle exhorts us to call to mind the faith and piety of those who have gone before us. “Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” As if he had said, Be ye animated by their example, and quickened to greater diligence in the service of your great Master, by the consideration of the goodness and mercy of God, extended to those who have finished their course upon earth with joy ;—expect that the Lord will deal as bountifully with you as He did with them ; and in the diligent improvement of your privileges, and in the constant exercise of the

grace daily granted you, copy the example of those holy persons who, having been faithful unto death, now inherit the crown of life.

We have abundant reason to praise the Lord, that not a few have been raised up amongst us in the present age, who, with the greatest truth, may be said to have been burning and shining lights in their generation, and who have been eminently useful in the church of God; as well by being instrumental in increasing the number of true believers, as by building up the children of God in their most holy faith. When such venerable men are called away by death, it is natural to suppose that the survivors, who have the cause of God at heart, will be deeply affected, and greatly lament their loss.

Among the many who, through Divine grace, have distinguished themselves, not only as men of deep piety, but as being eminently useful in the hand of the Lord, the late Mr. Mather has been exceeded by very few in the present age, perhaps by none, except those very extraordinary men of God who were the highly-honoured instruments of laying the foundation of the present revival of pure and undefiled religion in this and the neighbouring nations.

Mr. Mather, as appears from the account he hath given us in the Methodist Magazine, for the year 1780, pages 91, 147, 199, entered upon his public labours in the work of the Lord in 1757; so that he was forty-three years employed as a travelling preacher. What violent persecution and great difficulties he had then to encounter, and with what resolution, and zeal for the honour of God, and the salvation of souls, and with what meekness, patience, and unwearied perseverance, he endured all those

trials, will appear to those who will take the pains to read the account referred to. As he has only brought that narrative down to the year 1777, when he was stationed in Colne Circuit, and as it has pleased God, in His adorable providence, to call His faithful servant hence, it will be expected by many that I, who have been so long and so intimately acquainted with him, should favour the public with a history of the remaining part of his life and labours: but as he has left no account of these himself, I am at a loss for materials, and shall not be able fully to answer the expectation of his numerous friends.

That he was highly acceptable wherever he was stationed, all, I believe, will acknowledge; and as none could exceed him in diligence, so he was, in general, very useful. The Lord attended his labours with an abundant blessing. It may easily be learned in what Circuits he was stationed, from the time he breaks off his narrative, till he finished his work upon earth, by those who will take the trouble to look into the Minutes of our several Conferences. And therefore, as I am not able to say what particular success attended his labours in those Circuits, I shall waive relating that here. However, as from the year 1791 to 1794 he was stationed at Hull, and the three following years at Manchester, and in the year 1797 at Leeds, I beg leave to observe, that in all those places there was a considerable revival of the work of God. Many persons in those Circuits were awakened, and brought to the saving knowledge of God in a short time. This work was attended with some irregularities, and much noise and confusion. On such occasions, indeed, there are never wanting headstrong and imprudent persons who have far more zeal than discretion. These would take the

work out of the hands of God into their own, and drive the people forward much faster than they can go, and persuade them to profess faith before their judgment is rightly informed concerning the nature of faith, or their conscience awakened to a sense of sin; and by so doing ruin the work of God. These hot-headed persons generally look upon all to be gold which glitters; and account all to be enemies to the work of God who are not as rash and as ignorant as themselves. Hence, it requires no small degree of prudence, as well as courage, to withstand them, and to preserve others from running into their error. Mr. Mather, having had large experience of the different ways in which the Lord generally carries on His work, acted with wonderful prudence; and as he was a man that would use his authority when occasion required, he resolutely insisted upon proper order being kept in those prayer-meetings, which were well attended, and in which much good was done. By this means he preserved the work from that reproach and contempt which, in some other places, were brought upon it, where decorum and regularity were not maintained. In the mean time, he took great care of, and treated with remarkable tenderness, those who professed faith in Christ, and who were so suddenly and powerfully brought out of darkness into light. He well knew that these new-born souls required much nursing; that, however lively or happy they might appear to be for the present, yet they were in general exceedingly ignorant, and quite unestablished; and therefore he not only took abundance of pains with them himself, but he also was careful to appoint them to meet with those leaders who, he knew, would carefully and tenderly instruct them. Accordingly, many of this

description were preserved, and continue steady at this day, who, in all probability, if those means had not been used, would have soon turned back into the world again.*

Mr. Mather certainly had a remarkably strong natural understanding, and a mind capable of very great improvement. And if his lot had been cast in a different line of life, so that he had had the advan-

* It will be readily allowed, by most wise and good men, that the Lord, at certain seasons, works upon the minds of men in an extraordinary manner ; and that when this is the case, they are frequently affected to a high degree, and in an unusual way : and those who are acquainted with the state of the human mind, considered as alienated from God, and with the awakening influences of the Holy Spirit, will not be at all surprised to see persons, when suddenly and powerfully convinced of their lost and guilty condition, to be quite overcome with fear and sorrow, so as to cry out in the bitterness of their souls, on account of the danger to which they now see themselves exposed. To such as these the ministers of Christ, as well as the truly pious among private Christians, will readily administer all the spiritual assistance in their power. But as Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, and too often, by this means, prevails upon weak but well-meaning people to do his work for him ; these, on such occasions, will make more haste than good speed, and will heal (though they do not intend it) the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, crying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. When very zealous people see a person in real or apparent distress, they immediately go to him, and begin to exhort him to believe, perhaps without explaining what is to be the object of his faith. And if they can by any means prevail upon him to say that he believes, or finds comfort, they take it for granted the man is converted, and immediately sing praises to God on his account. But those who are better instructed know that it is a much greater thing to be truly converted to God than this comes to ; that it is very possible, and very common, for particular persons, under Divine impressions, to be graciously visited by the Lord, and to be sweetly drawn with the cords of Divine love, and to experience a degree of peace, before they be either thoroughly convinced of sin, or converted therefrom. The blessed God is perfectly acquainted with the

tages of a liberal education, he might have been one of the greatest lawyers, or the most eminent statesmen, in the present age. But the Lord designed him to move in a much higher sphere; and as He had deeply engaged his heart to Himself, by a sound conversion, so He led him to improve his understanding by reading and meditating upon His own blessed word, in order that, possessing a large degree of heavenly wisdom, he might be eminent in winning souls unto God. He did not, it is true, seek to improve his mind, as he informs us, by labouring to learn different languages. This did not appear to him the most excellent way for a preacher of the Gospel to walk in. Not that he despised human learning, or learned men: he highly esteemed both. But he was led to study men and things much more than books, except the holy book of God. And here he was well read, and had attained as clear and as deep an acquaintance with the Scriptures, as perhaps any of his brethren. He certainly acquired a large stock of useful knowledge, so that he was well qualified to fill up his station in the church of God, and to transact the most difficult business that came before him.

Considered as a man, he was possessed of real greatness of mind, so that where the honour of God or the salvation of souls was concerned, as he would spare no pains, so he dreaded no danger, and was not deceitfulness and treachery of the human heart, and knows how apt we are to abuse the blessings He so kindly bestows, especially if we attain them with little or no trouble. For it will generally hold good, that what is easily got is easily lost. In order that we may highly esteem and properly improve His grace, when we have received it, He makes us deeply to feel our want, and to know the worth of it before He bestows the heavenly treasure upon us. Our departed friend knew this well, and acted accordingly.

ashamed to speak with his enemy in the gate. He feared the face of no man. He was remarkably ready in answering those who opposed the work of God, in however high a station they might stand: for although he highly revered magistrates, and gave honour to whom honour was due, yet he was not to be terrified from his duty by the threatenings of any man, but would resolutely go forward with his work, in the name and in the strength of the Lord God. He had a large share of trials of this kind, being obliged more than once to appear before rulers, and answer for himself. But the Lord in whom he trusted did not leave him to himself on those occasions, but made him remarkably useful in procuring peace for His poor persecuted and oppressed people, and in delivering them out of the hands of their unreasonable and cruel enemies, on different occasions. At such times he would do that which many others could not, as he had a constitution which would bear the greatest fatigue, and endure the greatest hardship. And it may be said with the greatest degree of truth, that he never spared himself, but wore out his health and strength in hard labour, and in continual toil, night and day, till at last the weary wheels of life stood still, his natural strength being fairly worn out, so that he could labour no more.

For many years, as he interested himself in everything which concerned our Connexion, so he was constantly employed in the greatest difficulties which happened among us. And as no one was better qualified for this kind of work, so no man would more heartily or more cheerfully engage therein. Inasmuch as for many years past I have acted in concert with him, on a variety of very trying occa-

sions, I can testify, from my own knowledge, what unwearied pains he has taken, both with his tongue and his pen, what patience and longsuffering he has exercised, when having to do either with very ignorant or with headstrong men, in order to preserve or restore peace to particular societies. On all such occasions, although I sometimes differed in judgment from him, yet I most sincerely believe that his eye was single, and that he only wished to promote the honour of God, and the prosperity of His work.

As he has given us an account of the Lord's dealings with himself in the Magazine before mentioned, and as Mr. Benson has repeated a part of this, and added some edifying reflections upon his long and deep experience, in that excellent sermon published in the Magazine for last December, it is needless for me to say much upon this head. It is certain, however, that his experience as a Christian was both deep and clear. As he could not rest without a clear manifestation of the love of God, so, I am persuaded, he retained his confidence in the Redeemer, through the whole of his travels, to his latest moments. And not only so, but, soon after he was satisfied of his interest in Christ, he was convinced of the necessity of being wholly sanctified; and as he then had the privilege of sitting under the heart-searching ministry of Mr. Wesley, and also of the late Mr. Walsh, he never rested till the Lord brought him into this glorious liberty. And although he informs us that he did not always retain that degree of grace which was then given him, yet I am inclined to believe that he never wholly lost that blessing, but reaped much advantage from what the Lord then communicated to him as long as he lived.

He was generally exceeding lively in his own soul;

and hence he conducted the worship of God in the most animating and spirited manner. As I was stationed with him in London the year before he died, I could not but observe, that in meeting the penitents, at the intercession, and on many other occasions, he appeared with all the sprightliness and vigour of youth; and even at our watch-nights and lovefeasts he took a large share of the work, and went through the whole in the most lively and edifying manner. Indeed, he seemed as if he were never weary in the service of his blessed Master.

As he well knew the importance of secret prayer, so he spent much time in this holy exercise. He kept up a constant intercourse with God, and made all his requests known to Him, both for himself, his friends, the church of God, and the nation at large. He had learned from the sacred Scriptures the necessity of living by faith in the Redeemer; and knew by blessed experience how great a privilege it is to be admitted into the presence-chamber of an infinitely gracious God, to lay all our wants and weaknesses open before Him, and in the name of Jesus, and in the power of His Spirit, to wrestle in prayer for the accomplishment of all the precious promises recorded in the Bible. He could not have maintained his ground against the violent opposition which he frequently met with, nor could he have endured the heavy trials he was obliged to pass through, had he not thus given himself up to prayer. I most sincerely wish that, in this respect, we may all copy his example; and that we may so walk with God through life, that, like him, we may be divinely supported and comforted in death, so as to leave the same blessed testimony behind us which he has done.

As he lived near to God in private, so in his con-

versation with his friends he was generally cheerful, yet serious, solid, spiritual, and instructive. He never appeared to be at a loss for a subject for edifying discourse, and had generally much freedom of mind, when engaged in Christian conversation. Our blessed Lord informs us, "that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and that "out of the good treasure of the heart the good man bringeth forth good things." These words were remarkably verified in my friend. For as the word of God dwelt richly in him, as the apostle says it ought to do in every Christian, so his zeal for the honour of God, and the desire he felt to edify those he conversed with, led him to make a proper use of that sacred treasure which was lodged in his memory. There is but too much reason to fear that it is again becoming unfashionable to introduce religious subjects in conversing with our friends. This, in my opinion, is no sign of a growth in grace, but rather the contrary. If we are only serious, spiritual, and devout, when in the house of God, why do we pray that He would make us always so? And if we only show the people the necessity of living in the presence of God while we are in the pulpit, but when conversing with them appear as if we had no design to be so ourselves, I fear our discourses will have no very lasting effect upon them.

As Mr. Mather was acquainted with the state of religion throughout our Connexion, and with every remarkable event which happened amongst us, whether prosperous or adverse, by keeping up a general correspondence with the principal people, as well as with many of the preachers; so he brought everything before the Lord in prayer, or thanksgiving, as occasion required. For as no one had the

prosperity of the work of God more deeply at heart, so, I believe, no man more constantly and fervently wrestled with the Lord in prayer for the enlargement, as well as the establishment, of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, than he did.

He was a man of remarkably tender feelings ; and as he constantly visited the afflicted, the tempted, and those who were in distress, so he was always ready to pray with, to comfort, encourage, and relieve all such, to the utmost of his power. In this respect he had the advantage of many of his brethren, as we have reason to believe that several wealthy and well-disposed persons made him their almoner, and he had considerable sums to dispose of, as he saw necessity required. Hence he was able to assist several of our poor preachers, and their distressed families, in the course of the year, which the Conference had little or no knowledge of. And I have known him to contribute very liberally towards the relief of some particular persons who had before used him exceedingly ill, when he saw them brought into distressing circumstances. When on certain occasions it was said, " But such a one has acted very improperly, and deserves no notice," it was usual for him to reply, " It is very true : but yet he is now in distress ; therefore we should help him out of it as well as we can." I will not say, that he was never imposed upon, or that he never relieved persons who made a bad use of his bounty. I am inclined to believe the contrary, and that his compassion for the distressed led him more than once to plead the cause of some very unworthy objects. But allowing this to be the case, he erred on the charitable side, and therefore may well be excused.

At the general Conferences he took an active part

in all our affairs. During the life of Mr. Wesley, he was for many years, what some persons called, his right-hand man. He certainly assisted him very much on various difficult occasions, and was a principal member of the select Committee which he made choice of to advise and assist him in various important affairs which from time to time were laid before the Conference. And since Mr. Wesley's death it is well known that nothing of any moment was done amongst us, but he was more or less concerned therein. The preachers in general paid a great regard to his judgment; as many of them had been long acquainted with him, and were well satisfied of his uprightness, and that he had not only the interest of particular persons, but also of the whole Connexion, very much at heart. I never was yet acquainted with the man who was more ready to serve a friend than he was. It seemed to give him the most sensible pleasure to engage in any extraordinarily difficult affairs, in order to assist those who desired his help: and he certainly was well qualified to transact almost any kind of business; for he was blessed with a large share of sense, and had a general knowledge of men and things. I have now attended thirty-nine Conferences, and I never knew him absent from any, till the last year: and as he had, in all these years, been concerned in stationing the preachers, and in the most difficult parts of our business, especially since the death of our honoured father, for which he was certainly well qualified; so, many of us thought we could not do well without him. But herein the wonderful goodness of God, and the methods He takes to convince mankind that the greatest, the wisest, and the most useful of men are no more than instruments in His hand, pre-

very observable. And no one must glory in man; but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, and confess, to the praise of His name, that the help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself.

It is certain that the Lord confers a high degree of honour upon the person whom He is pleased to make an instrument for the spiritual good of mankind; yet let no one vainly think that the Lord cannot carry on His work without him. He needs no man to accomplish His purposes. He is never at a loss for proper instruments, because He can make them. The residue of the Spirit is with Him, and He can pour it forth upon whomsoever He will. And, to the honour of the infinitely wise and blessed God, I cannot but observe, that when He calls any one from this world, however useful he may have been, He fills up his place with another; so that the man, however great or good he may have been, and however necessary apparently to that body of people with whom he was connected, is scarcely missed by them. For when any one has faithfully served his generation, and finished the work which the Lord called him to do, he is removed from his labours, and another steps into his place. I am inclined to think that all who attended our last Conference will readily allow that they saw this remarkably verified; for although we all lamented the absence of our valuable friend, who had assisted us on all occasions, especially at the time of Conference, to the uttermost of his power, yet such was the goodness of God to us, that we got through our business remarkably well, and scarcely missed him who had been so exceedingly active on former occasions.

But although I so highly esteemed Mr. Mather, and praise the Lord for the grace and gifts which

were in him, yet I am far from supposing that he was wholly free from human infirmity. O, no; he had his weaknesses, and, no doubt, was deeply sensible of and humbled before God on account of them. But, with many other truly amiable and useful men, I have known him blamed by some persons where I thought he deserved praise. A complaint was made against him some years ago, and was believed by many, that he was growing rich by the Gospel, and was laying up treasures upon earth. Those who know what the income of a Methodist preacher is, cannot but know, at the same time, that this is impossible. In vindication of my faithful friend, I would observe, that his first wife, as well as himself, was a very great economist. They managed their little property with extraordinary prudence. For many years she had no servant, and conducted all her household affairs with such frugality, that they were enabled to assist his aged father, who by his own imprudent conduct was greatly reduced in his circumstances, and who had treated his son with cruelty when he was yet a boy of twelve years of age. Here Mr. Mather set an example worthy the imitation of all children, by returning good for evil, when his unkind father fell into distress in his old age. But this was not all: by the good management of their temporal concerns, they were enabled to do that for their son which others could not have done without very considerable assistance from some other quarter. Not that Mr. Mather sought high things for his son, or that he wished to make him great in this world: very far from it. He placed him in such a line of life, where, if Divine Providence had not interposed, he never would have made any considerable figure in life. Three different times was this

good man disappointed in placing out his son, so that he did not know what course to take. Then it was that a child of so many prayers was owned of God, and unexpectedly led into that line of life in which I doubt not but he is made a blessing to mankind. And I am happy to have it to say, that the son has had the honour and satisfaction to make the last hours of so kind a father as easy and happy as filial affection and tenderness could possibly make them, having, what I do not doubt he sincerely wished, the painful pleasure to accommodate his father at his house for some weeks before he made his exit. So kind, so tender, so affectionate a father certainly deserved the best return a son could make ; and I heartily praise the Lord on his behalf, he was not disappointed. But all Christian parents are not thus highly favoured. The kindness of parents to their children is too often but ill requited, and their old age is embittered by the bad conduct of those in whom they greatly delighted, and on whose account they have suffered much. But Mr. Mather's last moments were made as easy as the utmost attention of a most affectionate wife, who was ready to lay down her own life for his sake, and of a dutiful son, who seriously thought that he could never do enough for his father. Thus did the Lord make all his bed in his sickness, according to His promise, as His servant had ever shown himself ready to visit and comfort the afflicted and the dying in their distresses.

Persons who act in a public station, either in the church or in the world, let them be as prudent as they may, are sure to give offence to some people. Innocence itself could not pass through the world without blame. And though Mr. Mather was highly esteemed by very many, yet he was set at nought,

despised, and condemned by others. Hence I well know that I shall not be able to give such an account of him as will meet with the approbation of those on both sides. This I judge to be impracticable. But my design is to be impartial; and therefore, as for the honour of God I would endeavour to set forth those Christian virtues in which he excelled, so I would not attempt to represent him as an angel, but only as a man liable to mistakes and human infirmities.

Considered as a minister, he certainly was highly honoured of God, not only in that he was blessed with very excellent gifts, and qualifications for the work unto which the Lord had called him, but in that his labours in the Gospel were attended with very considerable success. His understanding was remarkably clear in the whole mystery of man's redemption by Christ Jesus, in the nature and extent of Gospel salvation, and in the way which the blessed God hath pointed out for fallen man to be put in possession of all the unsearchable riches of Christ. For although he was born in Scotland, and brought up a Presbyterian, yet it is well known that he was strongly attached to the Established Church. He attended the service of the church and the sacrament whenever opportunity served, and exhorted others to do the same. He was blessed with a sound judgment, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. He firmly believed that Jesus Christ tasted death for every man, and faithfully and constantly offered salvation to all, in His name. His zeal for the salvation of souls was very great, and his diligence in the work was highly exemplary. He was favoured with a strong constitution, which he did not spare. By travelling long journeys, in

bad roads, in all sorts of weather, and often preaching three, sometimes four, yea, five times a day, he wore it out in hard labour, till his Lord said unto him, "Come up hither." It may be said of him, with the greatest propriety, "In labours more abundant;" for he certainly followed the apostle's rule, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." He rushed through every open door, and was instrumental in opening not a few, planting the Gospel in many places. And, according to the direction given to the prophet, he lifted up his voice like a trumpet, and cried aloud to sinners of all sorts, solemnly warning them, in the name of the Lord, to break off their sins by repentance, and to turn to the great Shepherd and Bishop of immortal souls.

He bore a faithful testimony against that dangerous error, that a man may be in a state of favour and acceptance with God, and yet have no evidence of it. He constantly and strongly insisted upon the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, and the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit, and clearly proved these precious doctrines by the express testimony of the holy Scripture. But if he excelled in any thing above another, in preaching, it was in building up believers in their most holy faith, teaching them how to improve their present privileges, and exercise the grace already received, in bringing forth fruit unto holiness, in waiting upon God in all His ordinances, and in the steady and constant performance of every social and relative duty. Add to this, that he was remarkable for teaching and exhorting all to press forward toward the mark for the prize of their high calling. For as he firmly believed that the design of our Lord in all that He did and suffered

for us was, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and restore us not only to the favour, but also to the image, of God; and as he well knew the mighty opposition this glorious truth met with from the carnal mind which is in every man by nature, as well as from some of the friends of religion; he saw it to be his duty clearly to state, fully to prove, and zealously to insist upon this blessed truth, so that those who attended upon his ministry might see the nature of this great salvation, and be stirred up to follow after, in order that they might apprehend that for which they were apprehended of God in Christ Jesus.

He constantly preached a free, a full, and a present salvation; having clear views of the meaning of that expressive word, "By grace ye are saved through faith." He had witnessed the saving, sanctifying power of living faith in his own soul; and therefore, after the example of his Lord, he proclaimed, "According to thy faith be it done unto thee." "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." But being well experienced in the deep things of God, he was not easily deceived by external appearances. His preaching was not only experimental, explaining every part of the work of God upon the soul, but it was also practical. He taught the necessity of carrying religion into every part of our conduct, into the closet, the family, the shop, or the market, in order that in all things it might appear that we walk with God, and live under a sense of His presence, continually saying in our hearts, "Thou God seest me!" My highly-esteemed friend was led out in this line of preaching so much on some occasions, that he was sometimes represented as a legal preacher. He saw, with heart-felt grief, that conformity to this

world, in its various branches, was breaking in like a flood upon our societies. He saw that there was not that depth of solid piety, that degree of serious godliness in many, that he wished to see in all. And he was not without a degree of fear, that some preachers were not always upon their guard against that levity of spirit which too many of the people are carried away with, and that they did not sufficiently see the destructive tendency of what the apostle calls "foolish talking and jesting." He was very far from pleading the cause of what has been properly enough called "sour godliness;" but still he thought that our Lord's words had their meaning, and were of deep importance, "For every idle word that a man shall speak, he shall give an account in the day of judgment." As he knew that he was called to imitate Christ and His apostles, so he was persuaded that levity of spirit, and unprofitable conversation, were not sanctioned by their example.

With what diligence and constancy, with what holy zeal and fervency of spirit, with what natural eloquence and Divine pathos, he delivered the whole counsel of God from the pulpit, thousands and tens of thousands can testify: many of whom can joyfully confess, to the honour of God, that they are seals to his ministry; and many others, that they have been established and built up in the truth by his instrumentality.

When he first began to act in a public capacity, he had a considerable natural defect in his delivery: he spoke with such extreme quickness, that very few could understand him; yet with care and perseverance he entirely overcame this infirmity.

As Mr. Mather was clear and explicit upon every part of the Christian doctrine, experience, and prac-

tice, so he was exact in enforcing every branch of our excellent discipline. Meeting the societies, regulating the bands, holding lovefeasts, keeping watchnights, and excluding improper persons from the society, were all constantly attended to by him. He took great care to fill up the duties of that station in which he stood, and never would leave any part of the work which he apprehended to belong to him to any other person: he was so very particular herein, that he sometimes gave offence to the brethren who laboured with him; but in this also he acted from principle. Whether we view him as a Christian, a minister, a husband, a father, or a friend, as he took the word of God for his rule, and the Spirit of God for his Guide and Helper, so he acted in these several relations, as a man of God, a faithful servant of his beloved Master.

Thus did my dear friend spend his forty-three years of itinerancy among us; and wore out as firm a constitution in diligent and faithful labour, as almost any man was ever blessed with. But, like Moses, he had "respect to the recompence of reward;" which awaits those who turn many to righteousness. And as he spent his life in the service of God, he found the advantage arising from it upon his death-bed. He then had the supporting and comforting presence of the Lord with him, so that he bore with unbroken patience a very long and painful illness, and witnessed in death the sufficiency of Divine grace to make him more than conqueror over his last enemy. How wonderfully he was supported, how graciously he was comforted, how joyfully he looked death in the face, and with what holy triumph he finished his course upon earth, and entered into the joy of his Lord, hath

already been made known to the world; and, in consideration of this, let those be ashamed who have loaded this faithful servant of God with reproach, who have poured out floods of contempt upon him, to the wounding of his character, and hindering of his usefulness, as far as their influence would go. But he is now hid from the scourge of the tongue; and though they send forth their arrows, even bitter words, they can wound him no more.

My beloved brethren, we have lived to see our master taken from our head, our Joshua, our chief leader, under God, removed into Abraham's bosom: we have seen our elders in Israel, one after another, taken away, so that very few of them are left behind: Messrs. Hanby, Thompson, Murlin, Furz, Roberts, and Mather, have all taken their everlasting flight, in a very few years; and we shall soon follow them. Let us, then, "work while it is called to-day." Let us copy their pious example: let us follow them as they followed Christ; and, if it be possible, let us labour to excel them in holiness and usefulness: let us fervently and constantly pray, that a double portion of that spirit by which they were influenced may be poured out upon us all, so that we may finish well at the last, and unite with our dear brethren who are gone before us, in singing everlasting praises to our God and Saviour.

It is not likely that I should remain much longer with you; but my daily prayer shall be, as long as I am spared, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may ever bless and be present with you; that He may make all of you, not only burning and shining lights in the church, but also an abundant blessing in your generation, so that when I shall sleep with my fathers, you may still be

planting and watering in the vineyard of the Lord, till you also enter into your Master's joy. Take courage, my brethren: though men die, yet the Lord liveth; and He hath promised to be with you always, even to the end. Be much in prayer for the prosperity of Sion. Be very serious, watchful, and heavenly-minded. Be dead to the world, and alive to God. Be very zealous for the honour of your Lord, and exceedingly diligent in the work unto which He hath called you. Preach the Gospel with all simplicity and clearness, and in the spirit and power of Elias. In a word, be primitive Methodists, —Methodists altogether! That you may be such, is the ardent prayer of your affectionate brother and sincere friend,

J. PAWSON.

“BUT lo, the Lord for ever lives,
 And freely still His Spirit gives;
 Who never ties to one His grace,
 Can other faithful prophets raise:
 He doth His labourers remove,
 Yet carries on His work of love;—
 By whom He will, delights to send,
 And bless His church, till time shall end.
 Forth issuing from Jehovah's throne,
 Sent by the Father and the Son,
 The Holy Ghost His fulness pours,
 In glorious, everlasting showers:
 The King of saints resides below,
 His Spirit shall our vale o'erflow;
 Bring back the garden of the Lord,
 And show us paradise restored.”

IN addition to what my dear friend Mr. Pawson has said of that good man Mr. Mather, I beg leave

to mention a few things respecting him which occurred the last year. As I was much in company with him from the time that I came to London in 1799, and more especially after his illness commenced, I had a greater opportunity of knowing his spirit and conversation than I had ever had before. And, I must say, the more I knew him, the more I saw of his great excellency. Never shall I forget the faithful and affectionate manner in which he spake to two persons in this city, who had been indulged with society-tickets, from time to time, but had seldom, or never, met in class for some years. It seemed to me, at the time, to be his final warning to them, to take up their cross and deny themselves, or expect the entire loss of every serious impression. I believe he never was in that house afterwards.

During his illness, one Saturday morning when the preachers had met, as usual, to fix their labour for the ensuing week, and consult on the most likely way to promote the increase of genuine godliness in the Circuit, he desired we might all of us go into his room, that he might take, what he thought, his final leave of us here below. It was indeed an affecting time! We loved him as a father; and with the affection and tenderness of a parent, he exhorted and charged us to preach the same truths we had received and delivered; to keep to the Methodist discipline; and, above all, to live near to God in prayer; adding, "That Gospel which I have preached in the best manner I was able, I bless God I now find to be the power of God unto salvation. I know I have not followed a cunningly-devised fable; but I have nothing to depend on but Christ:—

'This all my hope, this all my plea,
Jesus hath lived, hath died for me!'

Yet I know that whatever I have done in the cause of Methodism, I have done with a single eye to the glory of God, and for the good of the body of preachers and people. I now expect soon to leave you. I love you all, and pray God to be with you, and with all the Connexion." We joined in prayer and praise, and he took leave of us in the most tender and friendly manner possible. When my wife was coming out of the room soon after, he held out his hand to her, and said, "O Mrs. Wood, live for eternity: the Judge is at the door, and I rejoice that He is."

The day following was a day of exquisite pain and affliction, and most of those who saw him thought he could not continue long; but he was happily resigned to the Divine will, whether for life or death. That evening, before preaching, Mr. Grant called to see him; to whom he said, when going into the chapel, "Give my love to the people, and tell them I have not followed a cunningly-devised fable: I now prove the word of truth to be the power of God to the salvation of my soul."

I think it was about June 10th, that, after a little respite, he was taken much worse. I sat up with him that night. He was delirious most of the time, and his short slumbers, during the intervals of ease, were soon followed by the most acute pain imaginable. But during the whole night, all that he said, even when delirious, evidenced the piety and devotion of his heart. One thing I particularly marked with pleasure; namely, the grateful sense he had of every little attention shown him, however trifling and unworthy of notice. Indeed, this shone forth

through the whole of his illness, and often did he express himself in the following manner:—"What abundant cause have I to praise God, that, in this time of suffering, I have every comfort and convenience in life; and, above all, an assurance that I shall be with Christ for ever!" Indeed, praise filled up the chief part of his time in his affliction.

His unwearied diligence in the work of the ministry; his kindness and fidelity as a friend; his tender sympathy with the poor and afflicted; his strict punctuality in keeping to time, and performing of promises; his readiness to forgive the grossest affronts, and overcome evil with good; and his deep piety towards God, have rendered his example highly worthy of imitation, and left an indelible impression of gratitude, affection, and esteem on the hearts of thousands to whom he had held forth the word of life. May I follow him as he followed Christ, and meet him when pain and parting shall for ever cease!

J. Wood.

WE subjoin to the above the following letter, addressed by Mr. Mather to the preachers in the London District, assembled there, May 13th, 1800:—

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,

BEING by sickness prevented from attending to the duties belonging to the chairman of the District, when called to it at Canterbury, I nominated brother Wood, with a part of you, to transact the business then needful to be done; the whole of which they,

I doubt not, will lay before you to-morrow, for your full investigation and final decision.

The same unerring hand still rests upon me, and sees good to deny me the pleasure of assembling with you: a pleasure with which I have long been indulged on these occasions. Yet He enables me to assure you, that I have not, for near fifty years, followed a cunningly-devised fable, either in what I have received or taught. That word, which has been my support in every former trial, I prove, in the present long affliction, to be the power of God to my salvation; and that in such a degree, that I would neither do nor suffer less for its promotion in the world, than, by grace, I have been able to do and suffer, since August 15th, 1757: nor since March 2d, 1791; you helping by your prayers, and that rich supply of the Spirit of His grace being vouchsafed, which He has afforded his worthless servant, when looked unto. Meantime, I now, 1. Recommend unto you brother Wood, as my substitute in the District-Meeting and Stationing-Committee: since, if spared so long, it is not probable I shall be capable of enduring the fatigues of attending. 2. I exhort, as you all wish the prosperity of the work, that you would gladly submit to the fullest and most minute examination of every part of your conduct, conversation, doctrine, and discipline, as is set forth in your Minutes, beginning with mine. For I am ready to submit to every censure you may lay on me, and to acknowledge and amend everything you may point out as wrong. And I entreat that you will herein give not a tacit consent to these things, but an express assurance of your hearty approbation. If you know, as I do and feel, the former will little avail in a dying moment. I hope you will be able

to say, (from the London District, to the Conference,) "We bear the most unequivocal testimony to our brethren's good conduct in every part of their office." Thus, you shall never be ashamed to speak with any enemy in the gate.

To God I commend you, and wish to be commended by you all, till we are admitted to His glory. Even so, prays your weak, but still affectionate, friend and brother in Christ,

A. MATHER.

LETTER FROM MR. ALEXANDER MATHER TO THE REV.
JOHN WESLEY.

EVESHAM, *December 17th*, 1760.

HONOURED SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with you and yours! Glory to be God, His work prospers in many parts of this Round! Particularly in Staffordshire, where our congregations are so large, that we can scarce contain them. And God, who brings them together, does work among them: and not among the outward hearers only, but also among our old members; so that above forty have found the Lord this last quarter. Most of these have been long seeking; some five, some seven, some ten years; yea, some from the first of your going to Wednesbury. Nor do I perceive that the reason of their not finding sooner has been, as it sometimes is, their negligence or disorderly walking: no; for the most part, they have been diligent in all the means, and blameless in their lives.

Although at Wednesbury several have been added, and many converted this last quarter, yet the most remarkable part of the work of God has been in that old, persecuted, steadfast society, Darlaston; who, in the midst of all the parties that have been in Staffordshire, have stood unmoved to their first principles; never encouraging any other party, no, nor suffering any of a different judgment so much as to sing a hymn amongst them. And this their steadfastness was the more surprising, as there were but about seven in the whole society (which consisted of forty-eight members) who professed saving faith at Michaelmas last. But, glory be to God! their number and their grace are greatly increased. Now there are above thirty out of the forty-eight who have saving faith, and have received it within these last six weeks; yea, many in a fortnight. And as their grace, so their number has increased thirty-three this quarter. Twenty-seven of them I joined last Thursday and Friday; many of whom had scarce ever heard till that week. Is anything too hard for the Almighty? Thou workest, and who can stay Thy hand?

The remarkable work amongst the outward people was occasioned by an apprentice of Mr. Thomas Day, whose heart the Lord touched in such a manner on Sunday night, December 7th, that he could not rest, but roared the whole night, to the great alarm of the whole family and the neighbourhood. They prayed with him; but he still remained miserable till Monday morning, when his distress was such, that his crying brought many together, insomuch that the house was filled and surrounded with people: before whom it pleased God to deliver him, and so to inflame his heart with love, and fill his mouth

with praise, that the beholders were astonished. It pleased God also to open his mouth to speak to those who were present, so that none (no, not the most stout-hearted and greatest enemies to godliness) were able to resist the spirit and power wherewith he spake. They fell before his word, cried for mercy, and above twelve were delivered that day. So the whole exercise of that day was prayer and praise, as also of the two days following. When the boy went from house to house, even the wicked, who could not withstand his word, being cut to their hearts, cried for mercy; to whom he pointed out Christ, and His willingness to receive them; and praying with them, many were delivered who had scarce heard a sermon. So visible is the change, that they abandon all their former ways and company, and are full of love. It would rejoice your heart to see them under the word; particularly two children, about nine years of age, who talk so feelingly of the love of God, that they would amaze you. Nor was the flame quenched last Friday, the boy being still employed as before. This whole town, young and old, seems alarmed, and come in troops to the preaching at Wednesbury. O Lord! maintain Thy glorious cause, and ride prosperously in the Gospel chariot, till the nations bow before Thee; and take Thou all the glory, for Thou art worthy! O, pray for me, that I may have wisdom in all things!

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate son and servant in the Gospel,

A. MATHER.

LETTER TO MR. WILLIAM MARRIOTT, JUN., OF
LONDON.

MY VERY DEAR MASTER MARRIOTT,

YOURS of the 2d ult. found me in the midst of our late Conference, where a great variety of new and important matters were agitated, and, as far as they then could be, settled, after the most serious deliberations we were capable of using, with an eye to the general good of a large body, at that time much divided in sentiment on some of the subjects which came then under consideration. Although it was agreed by all that these things, in their use and manner, were not essential to the present or the eternal salvation of man; yet it was very necessary that they should be settled for the peace and prosperity of our Connexion. How far this most valuable end will be answered by the things agreed upon, time will prove the best evidence. But it may be said, as matters then stood, that everything was done to keep as near as possible to our old path.

There were, however, many pleasing circumstances connected with the Conference, and one which was very awful. The congregations were exceedingly large, and many of the people came from distant parts. Among the men who differed in judgment much moderation prevailed, with a larger measure of unity and brotherly love than I have observed for many years, accompanied by an earnest desire in all to be more devoted and useful than ever.

The awful circumstance to which I alluded fell upon a most valuable man, a member of this society. Having declined business, he brought his wife to Leeds, to spend a week at the Conference; which

they did with much pleasure and spiritual profit. On their return, in a single-horse chaise, (in which they came,) they left the main road to go to Thorp-Arch, (a watering-place,) to spend a few days. The road being bad, the chaise was overturned. The woman was wounded in her forehead, and otherwise bruised ; while the man appeared to have received no hurt from the fall. He disentangled the horse, and with two handkerchiefs bound up the wound his wife had received. He appeared to be as composed in mind as free from bodily injury. Not being near any house, and unable to get up the carriage, they stayed in the rain till a kind Providence sent a man to their aid. By his help they raised the chaise upon the wheels again. At this moment Mr. Fox grew pale ; which being observed by the stranger, he caught him in his arms, and Mr. Fox instantly died !

To him, sudden death was doubtless sudden glory. He was a truly pious, exemplary, humane, and very beneficent man. In him the society has lost a useful and an ornamental member ; the world a shining example of meekness, gentleness, and every Christian virtue ; his dear wife, a kind, tender, and exceedingly affectionate husband ; and, above all, the poor a liberal and generous benefactor, whose compassionate heart was ever touched with seeing or hearing of their distress. He was as ready to show his commiseration for their distress by the rising tear, as to relieve it by the liberal hand.

All these losses turn so much the more to the eternal gain of him who is now reaping the full reward of all his love to God, manifested in his love to man. This, sir, speaks to us, " Go, and do thou likewise. Be ye therefore ready also ; for at an hour when you think not, the Son of man cometh." May

our loins be found girt, and our lights burning, and we ourselves as men who wait for their Lord's return from the wedding; that when He knocketh, we may open to Him immediately! So shall we be blessed, whether He approaches in the evening or the morning, at midnight or at cock-crowing. So shall the end of all our mercies, means, and correspondence be fully answered; and my dear young friend will not regret that I have, without design, filled my paper with some hints of this truly excellent man, and of his sudden transition from earth to paradise.

I shall only add, that such was the support which his dear wife found under her loss, that, though she was an entire stranger, on a common, with the remains of her husband put into the carriage with her, to bring to the inhospitable village, where scarcely a door was open to admit them,—the people at two inns and a private house having shut their doors at her approach,—yet she was enabled to bear all with much fortitude and Divine resignation. O sir, what but true religion, that which flows from the soul's knowledge of its interest in Christ, can avail under such circumstances? O my dear William, secure this! The way to obtain this you have expressed in your letter,—believing in Christ Jesus. To Him I commend you, and am joined by mine in love to your dear parents, and Master Thomas.

Your affectionate friend,

A. MATHER.

HULL, *September 4th*, 1793.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. WILLIAM HUNTER.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

August 18th, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

ACCORDING to your desire, I take the opportunity to write a little of the dealings of God with me ; but, as I have not kept any account in writing, many things have slipped my mind.

I was born in Northumberland, at a little village near Placey, in the year 1728. I was put to school early, and taught to read the Scriptures from a child ; but delighted most in the historical parts of them. I felt a degree of the fear of God when very young, and sweet drawings of love. Sometimes the thoughts of death were very dreadful to me, so that I felt very unhappy. I once dreamed that Satan came to me, and would have me ; when I waked, I was full of fear, and prayed much that I might be delivered from him ; and the impressions abode

upon my mind for many days : but as I had nobody to teach me the right way of coming to Christ, these good impressions gradually wore off.

When I was about fourteen, my father being a farmer, I was put to learn all the branches of farming. My father was very severe with me, and I dreaded him much : and yet I was often guilty of much disobedience against him ; for which I have been much ashamed before the Lord.

The first time you came to Placey, I, with several of my father's family, came to hear you : some of my brothers were much taken with you, and, I trust, will have cause to bless God for it for ever.

When I was about sixteen, I heard Mr. Hopper : as soon as he began to speak, his words affected me deeply, not with terror, but with love. I had a taste of heaven ; it seemed as though I was created anew ; there was a wonderful change in my tempers and conduct ; I laid aside everything that I thought was contrary to the will of God, and practised all religious duties. I attended preaching on all occasions, and felt much sweetness therein, and love to those that I believed were devoted to God.

I went on in this way for some time, till my companions began to take notice of me, and call me Methodist. Some of them set upon me one Sunday, and cursed and swore bitterly at me, telling me I was going to leave the Church, and the religion I was brought up in. This had a strange effect upon me. I gave way to them : they prevailed upon me to go to the alehouse ; there I was overtaken by my old sins again. The Spirit of the Lord departed from me : my heart became as hard as a stone. Darkness covered my mind again, and I was as

senseless to the things of God, as though I had never known anything at all about them.

I went on in this wretched state many months, living totally without God in the world. Through the advice of a young man, I went to hear preaching again. A great light was communicated to my understanding by the word, and it pierced my conscience like a sword. I felt my inward parts to be very wickedness; all the sins of my life stared me in the face, and lay as a heavy burden upon my conscience. I roared for disquietness of heart, and wept and made supplication. I was convinced I could not help myself, that I could not do anything to reconcile myself to God; and I had many fears lest the day of grace was past. O, the distress of soul I went through for many months! It was as though I had been forsaken of God, and hell was already begun in me. But the Lord was pleased to give me power over sin. I forsook every sinful way, and all my sinful companions. I sought the Lord with all my heart in all the means of grace. I attended preaching on all occasions, and read the Scriptures with great diligence: the way of salvation, revealed therein through Christ, was made clear to me; and I pleaded nothing but the merits of Christ for forgiveness. I often rose in the night to read and pray; and the language of my heart was,—

“ If I ne’er find the sacred road,
I’ll perish crying out for God.”

I felt great love to the Methodists, especially to the preachers, as the servants of the most high God, sent to teach us the way of salvation. The people took notice of me, talked with me, and wished me to cast in my lot amongst them. I did so, though I

did not think myself worthy; and I bless God, I have never felt a desire to leave them since. I continued mourning after the Lord, and at length He heard my cry. One day, as I remember, I was reading in a book, where the writer was answering that objection concerning the day of grace being past: the Lord was pleased to send me deliverance; I found springing hope, and a sense of His goodness. How did I admire the love of God, and the love of Jesus Christ to me! All my thoughts were swallowed up in heavenly contemplation; and I could truly say, "The Lord is my life and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me."

I now tried what the Spirit had wrought in me by the marks laid down in Holy Scripture; and hence I found reason to believe that I belonged to Christ, and was a child of God. I made a free-will offering of all I had, to be His for ever; and I thank Him, from the ground of my heart, that I have been kept in the same mind to this day; though I have great cause to be ashamed that I have made no better improvement, and often mourn and weep on that account.

When I had thus found the goodness of God to my own soul, I could not forbear speaking of it to others; and the Lord gave me wonderful light and courage in His blessed work. He helped me to reprove sin, wherever I met with it, with humility, meekness, and much prayer; yet without fearing the face of any man; though many said, I was out of my mind; yea, and wished me out of the world. The Lord enabled me to set my face as a flint, and to bear a testimony for Him, wherever I went; and I was much blessed in so doing.

There was a little town not far from ours, where I sometimes went, got a few poor people together, and talked to them about their souls. I often read the Scriptures to them, and sometimes made some remarks thereon. The Lord was pleased to bless my weak endeavours among them; so that a few of them gathered together, and the preacher joined them in a society, and put me in to be the leader. I met with many trials in this little way, and was often tempted to give it up; but I durst not.

I used to travel far on the Lord's day, to hear the word of God. If it happened the preacher did not come, I was pressed upon to give an exhortation to the people. This I frequently did; but I often went home distressed to the last degree, through a deep sense of my own unworthiness: yet it was not always so. At other times I was happy and lively, having strong evidence that I was doing the will of God.

Meantime several of the preachers spoke to me about travelling: but the importance of the work made me afraid; till in the year 1767, at the London Conference, Mr. Rowell recommended me, and I was taken in upon trial. I was then appointed for the Barnard-Castle Circuit, and entered upon my work with great fear: there seemed many difficulties in my way: however, I gave myself up to the Lord, and He was pleased to give me favour in the eyes of the people.

Two years after I was stationed in Yarm Circuit. I was afterwards appointed to Barnard-Castle Circuit again; and God was pleased to bless my labour, with that of the other preachers. We had such a work of God in several parts of this Circuit as I never saw. Hardly anything of the kind in

England hath exceeded it, both with regard to its swiftness and depth: the power of God bore all down before it, and it seemed as if God was about to convert all the world.

After I left this Circuit, I was placed at Hull, then at York, and afterwards in the Scarborough Circuit. We had a gracious increase of the work of God here; and I never found more enlargement of heart. We broke up much fresh ground, took in many new places, and many souls were converted to God. The last year you appointed me for the Thirsk Circuit. This has been a year of trial; but the Lord has stood by me, and I am strengthened.

What success I may have for time to come, I cannot tell. It is still my one desire to give myself wholly to the Lord, and to His blessed work. I wish to live to better purpose than I have yet done; to be more fruitful in His house, and in the world. I am conscious of many defects in myself, and feel my need of Christ every moment. My soul hangs upon Him, and I experience salvation from day to day: and I trust He that has kept me till now will keep me to the end.

Wishing you all peace and prosperity, I remain,
Rev. and dear Sir,

Your affectionate son in the Gospel of Christ,
WILLIAM HUNTER.

POSTSCRIPT.

RICHMOND, *August 29th, 1779.*

CONCERNING the account I gave you at London, as I writ it in haste, I believe it is very imperfect: several things have occurred to my mind since,

which I should have put in, if I had then remembered them.

As touching that greater salvation, being saved from inbred sin, I shall simply relate what I know of the dealings of God with me in this respect.

For some time after I knew the goodness of God to my soul, I was very happy: I sung in His ways for joy of heart, and His consolations were not small in me. I thought, indeed, I should learn war no more. It was then

“I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet.

“Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song;
O that all His salvation may see!
He hath loved me, I cried,
He hath suffer’d and died,
To redeem such a rebel as me.”

But afterwards it pleased Infinite Wisdom to open a new scene to me. I began to be exercised with many uncommon temptations, and felt my own heart ready to comply with the same: this brought me into great straits, and I began to call in question the work of grace in my soul. O, the pain and anguish I felt for weeks together! Yet all this while I was very earnest with the Lord, my soul clave to Him, and I often said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” Under this exercise I learned several things. As, first, that my nature was not so much changed as I thought: I found many things in me which opposed the grace of God;

so that, without continual watching and prayer, I was capable of committing the very same sins which I had been guilty of before. 2. I began to be more acquainted with Satan's devices, and found power from God to resist them. 3. I had very affecting views of Christ as my great High Priest, who was touched with a feeling of all my infirmities. 4. The Scriptures were precious to me, and I found great comfort in reading them. And, lastly, I was conscious of the need of a far greater change in my nature than I had yet experienced. But I then read mostly the Calvinists' writings, who all write, that sin must be in believers till death: yet I found my mind at times deeply engaged in prayer to be saved from all sin.

Thus I went on for a long time, sometimes up and sometimes down, till it pleased God to bring me to hear you at Newcastle. You preached, I well remember, from the First Epistle of John, i. 9: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This was a precious time to me. While you were preaching, a Divine light shone in upon my heart with the word, and I was clearly convinced of the doctrine of sanctification, and the attainableness of it. I came home with full purpose of heart, not to rest till I was made a living witness of it. I had now a clear view, 1. Of the holiness of God; and saw that sin could not dwell with Him. 2. I had a clear view of the purity and perfection of His law, which is a transcript of the Divine nature. And, 3. I felt my great unlikeness to both: and, although I felt no condemnation, yet, in the view of these things, I felt much pain in my spirit, and my soul was humbled in the dust before

Him! O, how I longed to be made like Him; to love Him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength! I had glorious discoveries of the grand provision made in the new covenant for the complete salvation of the soul; and I went on in joyful expectation, crying to the Lord to put me in possession of all He had purchased for me, and promised to me. Sometimes I seemed to be upon the threshold, just stepping into glorious liberty; but again fear and unbelief prevailed, and I started back. This cast my mind into great perplexity, and I often reasoned concerning the truth of the thing.

It would be tedious to relate the various exercises I went through for several years, without opening my mind to any one. I do not remember that I ever conversed with one upon the subject, or ever heard any one discourse upon it. Only, I think, about eighteen years ago, it pleased God that I heard Mr. Olivers preach a sermon upon the subject. His text was, "Let us go on unto perfection." His doctrine was clear, and his arguments strong. My heart consented to the whole truth, and I had clearer views of the way of attaining it, namely, by faith, than ever before. This added new vigour to my spirit, and I seemed to be more on the wing than ever. I prayed and wept at His footstool, that He would show me all His salvation. And He gave me to experience such a measure of His grace as I never knew before; a great measure of heavenly light and Divine power spread through all my soul; I found unbelief taken away out of my heart; my soul was filled with such faith as I never felt before; my love to Christ was like fire, and I had such views of Him, as my life, my portion, my all, as

swallowed me up ; and O, how I longed to be with Him ! A change passed upon all the powers of my soul, and I felt a great increase of holy and heavenly tempers. I may say, with humility, it was as though I was emptied of all evil, and filled with heaven and God.

Thus, under the influence of His power and grace, I rode upon the sky. My soul fed on angels' food, and I truly ate the bread of heaven. I had more glorious discoveries than ever of the Gospel of God our Saviour, and especially in His saving the soul from all sin. I enjoyed such an evidence of this in my own mind, as put me beyond all doubt : and yet I never had such a sense of my own littleness, helplessness and unworthiness as now. So true it is, that only grace can humble the soul.

From the time the Lord gave me to experience this grace, I became an advocate for the glorious doctrine of Christian perfection : according to the gift He has been pleased to give me, I bear a testimony of it wherever I go ; and I never find my soul so happy as when I preach most upon the blessed subject.

Thus I have simply related what I know of the work of God in my heart. I desire to give Him all the glory. But I have great cause to be ashamed before Him for my unfaithfulness. I feel I need His grace every moment : I stand by faith ; I have as much need of Christ as ever ; I may truly say,—

“ Every moment, Lord, I want
The merit of Thy death.”

Glory be to His name, I find my soul united to Him, and my heart cries, “ None but Christ ! ” I am kept by His power ; I enjoy salvation ; my heart

is fixed, my anchor is sure and steadfast. I believe nothing shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

I conclude with saying, Though the whole of our salvation is from the Lord, yet He deals with us as rational creatures. He gives us light and conviction of our lost state; then the heart is humbled, and the soul bows before Him. He then speaks peace. This is done in a moment, and faith in the soul is the root of all Christian holiness. Thus the work of sanctification is begun in the heart, and the person is in a capacity of living to God, and growing in grace. If He finds us faithful in a little, He shows us there is a state of greater liberty provided for us. The soul being open to the Divine teaching, He shows us our want of this. We seek it with our whole heart, and He is pleased to put us in possession of it. This too is generally given in a moment, and perfectly frees the mind from all evil tempers, and enables us to love the Lord with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves.

Being thus perfected in love, we are much more qualified to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, than ever. O precious salvation! let me ever be a witness of it!

An Account of the last Affliction and Death of Mr. William Hunter, Preacher of the Gospel; communicated in a Letter from Mr. Thomas Dodd, of Nenthead, to Mr. Mather.

ON the 17th of July, 1797, Mr. Hunter came to my house, having previously wrote him to come and take care of the society at Nenthead in my absence, being then at Tynemouth for the benefit of my health. When I came home on the 27th, I was struck with Mr. Hunter's appearance, which was greatly altered from the last time I saw him, which was on the 13th of April. On inquiring how he was, he said, "Very poorly;" and intimated he was much exhausted by meeting the classes, and preaching twice on the Sunday before. At night he preached for the last time, from Matt. xxiv. 44, "Be ye also ready;" and made many excellent remarks upon the subject, to which the people seriously attended, as unto the words of a dying man. In the morning he looked refreshed and pleasant, though very weak, and in the course of the day frequently walked out with me; but towards evening he began to breathe with difficulty. About one o'clock in the morning he called us up, and said, "I am almost dead." I was greatly affected with his humble, quiet, composed confidence in God. The preacher and the Christian shone with peculiar lustre: it was evident that he possessed what he had long been with holy fervour inculcating upon others.

In the morning he got up about nine o'clock, and came down stairs; but it was too plain that his dissolution was approaching apace. On the 30th he breathed with less difficulty, and the fever was much

abated; which I attributed to his drinking plentifully of lemonade. When he spoke, which was but seldom, his words were solemn and affecting. On Monday, the 31st, he frequently forgot himself, and had various symptoms of death about him. I was afraid he would lose his senses for want of sleep, having had none for four or five days. August 1st, he frequently said, "I am a monument of God's goodness: glory be unto His name for ever and ever!" In the evening he said, "The Lord is my strength, and my song; He also is become my salvation;" and added, "The Lord be praised for ever and ever." "I am a monument of God's rich mercy." I asked, "If you die with us, shall a funeral sermon be preached on the occasion?" He answered, "Yes; and you must preach it." I requested he would name a portion of Scripture. After a short pause, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) A person present happening to say, "Mr. Hunter gets no sleep;" he replied, "Sleeping or waking, all is well: glory be to God for ever!" About ten he gave out his favourite hymn,—

"I long to behold Him array'd
With glory and light from above;
The King in His beauty display'd,
His beauty of holiest love," &c.

He then prayed with great fervour.

On the 2d the pins of the tabernacle seemed to slacken apace, and the pitcher was ready to break at the fountain, and all the animal powers were almost exhausted, and refused to do their respective offices.

In the evening, when I sat down by him, he frequently took my hand in his, and attempted to say something respecting the Divine law, but was not able to speak. At length he cried out aloud, "Glory be to God, He has fulfilled all righteousness! If this was not included in His obedience, it would be imperfect; and then what should we do?" His whole salvation he rested on the merits of the Redeemer. While the bed was making, he sat in a chair, and desired we would sing the above-mentioned hymn; which was done in a solemn manner, during which his happy soul was swallowed up in the love of God. He then prayed with an holy fervour and devotion suitable to the occasion. About one o'clock in the morning we were called up to see him die; but he got over this struggle, and lay in quiet slumbers till eight o'clock. When I entered the room, he said, "There is much to do before we can die: but I have no fear; my whole heart is devoted to God; I have not followed cunningly-devised fables." When any persons came to see him, he was very particular in recommending to them the service of God, with all its attendant comforts; nor did he suffer any to depart without pouring out his solemn benediction upon them. He frequently repeated Mr. Wesley's hymn,—

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath," &c.

He would then burst into tears of joy; and, taking my hand and kissing it, said, "O, how I love you, my brother!" Coming out of a short slumber, and fixing his eyes on the opposite side of the room, he cried out, "Precious Christ! precious Jesus! What a sight is this! A poor unworthy creature dying, full of faith and joy in the Holy Ghost." Adding,—

"A feeble saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way."

When he was raised up to drink a little wine-and-water, he said with an air of holy triumph, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" In the evening he attempted frequently to whisper something weighty respecting the goodness of God; and got out, "Offer me up to God in prayer." About nine o'clock he whispered in my ear, "Pray and praise." And indeed, when we prayed in his presence, the glory of God filled the place. He would often whisper, "When will my Lord come?" and when I observed, "God's time is a good time," he replied, "All is well; all is well."

On Saturday, when I entered the room, he took my hand, but could not speak. Asking him, if he felt much pain, he laid his hand upon his right breast. Through the whole of Mr. Hunter's affliction there appeared such perfect resignation to the will of God, that I durst not pray for life or death; but that God would treat His servant according to the good pleasure of His unerring goodness. On Wednesday he desired that the preachers might be informed of his case and situation. I asked, if he meant the preachers then assembled in Conference. He replied, "All of them: let them know I have never varied from the Methodist doctrine and discipline, from my first setting out." Whenever he had an interval of ease, he discovered much patience and humility, and was a pleasing ornament of his profession. On the 9th, after prayer in the evening, as I was sitting by him, I happened to say, "What has the world to call happiness, compared to this?" not thinking that he heard me; but he

replied, "It is all a cheat." I then asked, if he had much pain. He laid his hand as usual on his right breast, and said, "But all is well." His whole deportment fully evidenced undissembled piety and true godliness. On Thursday my wife asked him, if he was desirous of being gone. He answered, "I am passive." He said little more till the evening, when all the powers of his soul seemed deeply engaged with God and eternal things.

On Saturday morning, the 12th, at four o'clock, those who sat up with him called us up to see him depart. When I entered the room, I asked, if he knew me. He whispered, "Yes." I said, "Is God present with you?" he replied three times, "O yes." Upon wetting his lips, he said, "Glory be to God! We should praise Him for everything." In the evening he took a cup of cocoa; and, after changing his linen, he was blessed with an interval of ease, and looked pleasant and cheerful. I read to him, in a slow soft manner, the 32d and 35th chapters of Isaiah; and observed on the conclusion, "How beautiful is the word of the Lord!" He lifted up his hands and eyes, and cried, "May all the ends of the earth praise Him!" Sunday, the 13th, he appeared on the threshold of eternity. I said to him, "Sir, you are very weak this morning." "Yes," he replied; "but the Lord is strong: glory be to His precious name for ever!" In the evening he nearly fainted. When he opened his eyes, he whispered, "All is well: there is nothing wrong." When I prayed by him, he was perfectly sensible, and exerted his remaining strength in hearty amens. I put my hand into his, when leaving the room, and asked, if he knew me. He answered, in a broken whisper, "Very well." He then, as well

as he was able, blessed the children present, and exhorted them to seek the Lord. About four in the morning of the 14th I was hastily called; and after being a few minutes in the room, the happy spirit of this blessed man of God took its flight into the regions of eternal repose. Thus died, as he had lived, Mr. William Hunter, full of Divine peace, love, and joy. During the seventeen days of his affliction the enemy was not permitted to approach him; for perfect love cast out fear; and, in the fullest sense of the word, he rejoiced evermore, prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks unto God. I said in my heart, and with my whole heart, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord! Let my last end be like his!"

THOMAS DODD.

*Nenthead, Alston-Moor,
September 6th, 1797.*

A farther Account of Mr. Hunter, by an affectionate Friend, whose acquaintance with him commenced between twenty and thirty years ago.

October 6th, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

HEARING a letter read this morning, which gave a relation of the happy and peaceful departure of Mr. Hunter, whose ministry I sat under at York, in the years 1773 and 1774, it brought to my mind several circumstances relating to that blessed man, which, upon further consideration, I thought might be useful and acceptable, not only to his numerous friends in various parts of England and Scotland,

where he laboured with great fidelity and uprightness, but likewise to all who desire to follow him as he followed Christ.

At the time of my first acquaintance with him, he enjoyed much of the power of religion, as his spirit and temper, as well as his conversation and preaching, abundantly demonstrated. I remember to have heard him say, that when he first entered upon the laborious work of a Methodist preacher, his discourses were confined chiefly to the first principles of religion, exhorting and inviting sinners to repent, and pointing them to Jesus Christ, in order that they might obtain, through faith, the pardon of their sins. But after a season his mind was more engaged in building up believers in their most holy faith, and showing them the way, both by precept and example, of obtaining deliverance from their evil tempers, and increasing in holiness of heart and life.

You doubtless remember that his understanding in the things of God was truly enlightened, and his method of expressing himself was solid and weighty, which gave additional force to the arguments he produced in favour of godliness, so that they sunk deep into the minds of those who heard him. His expressions were plain and strong, accompanied with genuine simplicity, and such a sense of the importance of his office, that few could hear him without being impressed by the subject which he treated upon. The same serious deportment which he maintained in the pulpit, he supported wherever he went. His speech indeed was slow and deliberate, but without any affectation. Heavenly wisdom dropped from his lips, and manifested that his piety

was uniform, and that he lived and walked in the Spirit; so that, whether in the pulpit, or in private conversation, he was always the same. In his intercourse with the people, his great object was their edification, always leading the conversation to something suitable to the state they were in. I may say, with the strictest propriety, that he was a wise master builder in the church of Christ, and well acquainted with Divine things, which he had learned from the Holy Scriptures, as well as from his own experience, and the knowledge he acquired of the temptations, trials, and afflictions which others had gone through. These qualifications rendered his visits among us very useful. We never were favoured with his company without receiving some benefit. He either discovered to us the devices of Satan; or more clearly pointed out the way of faith; or unfolded some part of Christian experience with which we were unacquainted. He faithfully laboured to strengthen the weak hands, and to confirm the feeble knees. I may likewise add, that his fellow-labourer in the work trod in the same excellent path; which rendered our intercourse with them exceeding profitable. Our hearts were softened, and our desires continually enlarged, to obtain further degrees of redeeming love. By these happy means we were strengthened and encouraged to persevere in the good way, and improve the Divine impressions we received from time to time under the word.

Mr. Hunter's deportment was grave and serious, without any mixture of lightness or trifling. His humility shone in a variety of instances. When in the company of his brethren the preachers,

his unassuming and modest carriage before them showed that he preferred each in honour to himself. It seemed as if he continually recollected our Lord's words, "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." He confined his labours chiefly to the flock over which he was appointed; never appearing forward to engage in anything where he thought himself not particularly called. Hence, although he was united to the Methodists in the closest and most affectionate union, yet he very seldom took any active part in the Connexion, except that of bringing sinners to God through faith in Christ, and building up believers in peace and purity.

In looking over some of my papers, I found the following remarks from a sermon of Mr. Hunter's, preached in the year 1781, on Christian holiness. Whether I had committed them to writing at the time I heard him preach, or procured them from some friend, I cannot now recollect; but I beg leave to transcribe them, hoping they may be useful to those who are desirous of obtaining purity of heart. The discourse was upon Hebrews vi. 1. After exhorting believers to go on to perfection, Mr. Hunter observed, that, "without this, we cannot increase in the Divine life, nor obtain a becoming meetness for glory. When our eye is fixed on Christ, and all the powers of the mind are engaged in this great and blessed exercise, then the work of sanctification is carried on in all its parts. Sin grows weaker and weaker; Divine love spreads through the soul. Faith grows; and the love of God and man increases. In this temper of mind,

the believer pants after the full enjoyment of God, and earnestly prays for the accomplishment of His great and precious promises. Thus, in the exercise of His talents, and in the use of all the means of grace, the blessed moment comes;—the soul lays hold of this, or some similar promise, by the strong arm of faith, ‘I will save you from all your uncleanness.’ The Holy Spirit spreads His powerful influences through the heart, like a refiner’s fire, and burns up, root and branch, all the remains of indwelling sin. The Lord speaks to the heart, ‘Thou art Mine: I have redeemed thee.’ The great mountain of corruption is at once removed. The soul enters into its holy habitation; it lives and rests in God; and continually says, ‘Here will I dwell; for I have desired it.’ When we enter into this great and glorious liberty, the Lord enlarges our capacity, and enables us to make swifter progress in the Divine life. There is a gradual work carried on in the soul after the evils are destroyed, so that we may say to all believers, ‘Grow in grace; and go on to higher degrees of evangelical purity.’ We receive no new gift, but larger measures of the same love and grace, which prepare and fit us for eternal life. His commands are not grievous; but we delight in doing and suffering His blessed will. There are many graces which the Lord communicates to His people, the value of which we should never know, if we were not called to suffer with Christ: but while we continue looking to the Lord, and exercising the talents imparted, they increase abundantly; and we learn to put every trial we meet with among those things that work together for our good. Thus the believer takes up his cross,

and goes on through evil report and good report ; not seeking the esteem of men ; but always endeavouring to keep a good conscience, and approve himself to God. In this state, no distracting fears or doubts can depress the mind, either with regard to its present or future welfare."

I am, dear brother,

Yours in Christ,

F. P.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. ROBERT ROBERTS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOLTON, *July 7th*, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

WHEN you were at Liverpool in the spring, you desired me to write an account of my life; but at that time I had little thought of doing it, as I could not see that it would answer any valuable end. Having, however, had time to consider the matter seriously, I now judge it may be of some use to those into whose hands it may fall, especially to those among whom I have preached the word of God. I have therefore ventured to send you a sketch of the most material things I can recollect respecting myself; and I pray God that it may be a means of promoting His glory, and the cause of religion in the world.

I was born in the year 1731, at Upton, near Chester. My parents were respectable farmers. My mother died when I was but eight years of age, and

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my father when I was sixteen, to my unspeakable loss. They were industrious, frugal, and prudent, and took more care of their children's morals and education than most parents do. While my father lived, I was employed in his business; but after his decease, I was put apprentice to a wheelwright in Chester.

As I was brought up a member of the Established Church, I attended the Church service, but understood neither the prayers, preaching, articles, nor homilies, being ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the power of God. I have reason to believe, that the words of St. Paul were but too applicable to myself and the generality of those among whom I then lived: "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another."

I was in great bondage through fear of death from my infancy, and an entire stranger to the way of peace. I had no notion of salvation through a Redeemer, and knew no more of the nature and necessity of the new birth than Nicodemus did. Nor do I remember that I ever heard one Gospel sermon till I was above twenty years of age: so that I have reason to add, I was at that time "without Christ, being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." And yet I was kept from the commission of scandalous sins. I was sober by constitution, diligent in business, and very careful. And as I went to church oftener than many, I was deemed by myself, and those who knew me, better than others. But I was a great sinner before God, and a child of

wrath ; my heart was deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; and my tempers, words, and actions were abominable in His sight with whom I have to do.

The first good impression, as far as I can recollect, that was made upon my mind, was by a few words dropped by Mr. Thomas Brisco, without any seeming design of his : but God sent them home to my heart, and they were as a nail fixed in a sure place. We had been schoolfellows when very young ; and when I went to live in Chester, we were intimate companions till he became religious. But then I avoided him, as though he had had the plague, because he was called a Methodist. Nevertheless, I retained a secret respect for him. About two years after his conversion, being in company with him and his brother, he happened to mention some rude usage they had met with that day as they returned from the church : among other things the people cried out, "There go the sanctified Methodists !" He pitied their ignorance, and with a good deal of fervour wished that what they had said were true ; adding, "If I was sanctified, I should not be long out of heaven." He talked about death, as though he was not afraid of it, but rather as if it were a desirable event. This struck me indeed, and made a deep impression on my soul, and convinced me that there was something in religion which I was a stranger to.

From this time I entertained a good opinion of the Methodists, and believed them to be the servants of the living God. I began to pray, and strive against sin ; I likewise resolved to join the society, but not yet. For I knew, if I went among them, I must suffer persecution. At that time the Methodists

were looked upon as the worst of men, and the most horrible things were laid to their charge that could be invented. They were represented as hypocrites, blasphemers, disturbers of the peace of families and of the nation; and to associate with them was said to be the way to destroy body, soul, and substance. Others, indeed, might curse and swear, get drunk, profane the Sabbath, and starve their families, and yet be in no danger of persecution or ill-treatment of any kind; but, on the contrary, were deemed innocent creatures, in comparison of the Methodists, &c. I thought, "I cannot bear this usage where I am known, and from my relations and neighbours; but, if I live to the expiration of my apprenticeship, I will go to London, or some other place where I am not known, and then I will be a Methodist."

When I was about twenty-one years of age, Mr. Brisco invited me to hear Mr. John Hampson. I went with him, but was very much ashamed, and afraid of being seen by any that knew me. However, I was well pleased with what the preacher said, and believed him to be a messenger from God. Notwithstanding this, I did not hear another preacher for near six months; for I feared persecution. Nevertheless, I retained my good opinion of the people, and the way in which they worshipped God; and now and then I spoke a word in their favour. My desires increased, I prayed frequently, and more fervently, but was overcome by sin, although I wished to be delivered from it, and made many resolutions against it. But, alas! I was without wisdom and power, and too often was led captive by the enemy of souls. At length I took courage, and went to hear another preacher. The discourse was made useful to me, and likewise the conversation of

some pious young men belonging to the society. I resolved, by Divine grace, to serve God, and save my soul. My mind became in a measure enlightened, and I was enabled to forsake my sins and sinful companions all at once. The latter was no hard task; for most of them fled from me, as soon as I was reported to be a Methodist: they were glad to get out of my way, lest I should reprove them, or cause them to be stigmatized with the same opprobrious name.

I now desired admission into the society; and after being examined by one of the preachers, respecting the state of my mind, my motives, &c., I was favoured with that privilege; for such I then looked upon it to be, and I see it in the same point of light at this day. And I hope, and believe, I shall have reason to praise God to eternity that I ever was united with that despised people, whom God had greatly blessed; and I trust He will continue to bless them for ages to come.

I now constantly attended upon all the means of grace. I went to church, and received the sacrament almost every Lord's day. Divine light broke in upon my soul with so much clearness, that I was astonished at myself, and was ready to say, "Where have I been? and what have I been doing all my life till now?" I compared myself to a man who had lived all his life in a dungeon, and was brought suddenly out of it into the full blaze of day. The Scriptures seemed new; as also the Common-Prayer Book and everything that was spiritual. And I was fully convinced that the doctrines taught by the Methodists, and those contained in the word of God and the Common Prayers of the Church of England, must stand or fall together; there being no difference

between them. I also saw that the Methodists had been greatly injured by slanders and evil reports; for instead of finding them to be hypocrites, disturbers of the peace of families, enthusiasts, &c., I found them sincere, peaceable, humble, and rational Christians; minding the things of this world in their place, and not neglecting those of another. For these reasons my soul was firmly united to them.

And now I met with what I expected; namely, persecution from relations, friends, and neighbours; and wherever I went, some railed, and others cursed me, and said, "it would be no more sin to kill me than to kill a mad dog." Others pitied me, and cursed the false prophets, as they called the preachers, who had deceived me, and driven me out of my senses. Into whatever street or lane in the city I went, I met with reproach and cruel mockings. This was a great trial to me; yet, by the grace of God, I bore it; though sometimes shame made it a sufficient exercise for all the patience, resolution, and grace I had. From my first setting out to be religious, I never denied the truth; neither would I suffer its professors to be spoken against, without vindicating them to the utmost of my power. And I thank God I always found somewhat to say that would either convince or stop the mouths of gain-sayers; for I have always observed that the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, and that the enemies of the truth cannot stand before it.

I had not been long among the Methodists, before I was made sensible of my guilt, misery, and danger, and likewise of the absolute necessity of having an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ; that my sins might be forgiven, and that I might be born again;

without which, I knew I could not see the kingdom of God. I sought the Lord with earnestness day and night; and even wished it had been possible for me to live without sleep, that I might have spent all my time in this employment. Indeed, I did make a very little sleep serve, though I wrought hard every day. The consideration, that I had wasted so much of my short life, in a state of sin, ignorance, and rebellion against so good and merciful a God, greatly affected me, and I found it hard work to forgive the ministers I had sat under so long a time, for not instructing me in the essential doctrines of the Gospel; for I was persuaded that if I had heard the truths of the Gospel laid down in a clear manner, I should have been brought to an acquaintance with the Lord some years before.

It was in the month of June, 1754, that I joined the society; and about six weeks after I experienced that peace which passeth all understanding. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and His Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was His child. And now I blessed His holy name that ever I was born. I loved Him who had first loved me; and with joy declared His goodness to my fellow-travellers, and we rejoiced together.

In a few weeks after I had found peace with God I began to see and feel the depravity of my nature in a greater degree than I ever had done before. At first I was dejected and cast down; then I began to doubt that I had deceived myself in concluding that the Lord was reconciled to me; and, my comfort decreasing, by and by I entirely cast away my confidence. And now a horrible dread overwhelmed my soul; and, to increase my distress, Satan threw his fiery darts at me, which stuck fast in my mind,

particularly blasphemous thoughts. For some months: such thoughts crowded into my mind as are not fit to be mentioned, and which could only proceed from the prince of darkness. The enemy then suggested that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost,—that there was no mercy for me,—and that these thoughts were not from him, but arose from my own heart. This affected me more than anything I had ever felt: to think that I should have such thoughts against that blessed God who had been so kind to me, and whom I desired to love and honour for ever, pierced me with inexpressible anguish.

In a short time I gave up all hope of mercy and deliverance, and sunk into utter despair. I imagined that I had blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, which threw me into such inexpressible misery, that I had no rest day or night, but in the morning I was ready to say, “Would God it were evening!” and in the evening, “Would God it were morning!” I fasted, prayed, and used every means of grace constantly, and resolved to serve God as long as I lived, if He did send me to hell when I died. I do not know that I gave way to one known sin, open or secret, when this distress came upon me, except that of unbelief. I conversed with the most experienced of the children of God I met with, but could find none who had drunk so deep of the wormwood and gall as I had done. However, they did all in their power to comfort me; they told me that God was with me, and would deliver me. I likewise read all the books I met with that were calculated to direct and help a soul in deep distress, but found few suited to my dreadful case. The books I received most benefit from were, Bolton’s “Instructions for the right comforting of afflicted Consciences;” Bunyan’s

“Pilgrim’s Progress,” and his “Grace abounding to the chief of Sinners.” At one time I was a little comforted with the following lines :—

“ I never shall rise
To my first paradise,
Or come my Redeemer to see ;
But I feel a faint hope
That at last He will stoop,
And His pity shall bring Him to me.”

One day when I was at work, musing on my unhappy state, those precious words of Scripture were applied to my soul with some degree of power : “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” This afforded me some consolation : but it was only like the morning cloud and early dew ; it soon vanished away. I often thought that both God and the whole creation were against me ; and concluded, that I should have been happy had I been anything but a man ; and was ready to say, “O that I had never been born !” But one Saturday evening, at a prayer-meeting, the Lord blessed me with the powerful drawings of His love, and with a dawning of hope that He would yet be gracious to me. I was as a man raised from the dead ; for I had been a long time in darkness, and would, I thought, have given as many worlds, had it been in my power, as there are minutes in eternity, for the least dawning of hope. From this time till my great deliverance, I frequently found comfortable visits from on high.

My great distress continued about nine months ; and the Lord was pleased to sanctify it to me. I was more abundantly sensible of the power of unbelief, and of my helplessness. I clearly saw I must be saved by grace, or not at all. I was stripped from all self-righteousness, and every other dependence,

but a crucified Saviour, and was made willing to be saved in God's own way as a sinner; yea, as the most unworthy of all creatures. I thought I was willing to wait till my last breath, if I were but sure the Lord would then smile upon me, and show me His salvation. The Lord then graciously manifested Himself unto me, as my Lord and my God, in a powerful manner. He overturned my unbelief, and all my doubts and fears. He removed all my misery, and filled me with peace and joy through believing; so that I was as a giant refreshed with new wine; my cup ran over, and I was ready to proclaim my great Deliverer's praise upon the house-top. I could no more doubt of the favour of God than of my own existence. And such were the impressions then made upon my mind, that I was a stranger to doubt or tormenting fear for many years after.

Being appointed to meet a class, I endeavoured to comfort and strengthen my brethren, and to promote the work of God both among the society and others. I found a willingness to do or suffer anything, so that I might glorify God, and be a means of saving sinners. After some time I gave a word of exhortation, first in Chester, then in North Wales, Cheshire, and Lancashire; and the Lord was pleased to make my labours acceptable to many, and useful to some, particularly at Park-gate and Neston, where I lived and followed my business near two years. But I had many trials; for the people agreed not to employ me, because I was a Methodist preacher. I was brought before the justices, at one of their monthly meetings: but this did not afford my persecutors cause for triumph; for I had words given to me which confounded them all.

Many things were done to prevent me from staying

in Neston, but in vain. For, after trying other means, I leased some land there. Then they threatened to press me, which obliged me to get a licence. Afterwards, they threatened to punish me, if I preached in an unlicensed place, and I was obliged to get the house licensed. But this did me little service; for they sent for the man who lived in the house, and, partly by threatenings and partly by promises, prevailed upon him not to let me preach there any more. We then had another house to seek, and could not meet with one but at an extravagant price, near two miles from the town. However, we went thither winter and summer; and some seed was sown that abides to this day; a few sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and for many years they have had a convenient preaching-house to worship God in.

It was strongly impressed upon my mind that I was called to preach the Gospel; and I found such desires to do it, that everything else seemed burdensome to me, as I judged I was out of my place. And though the persecution and opposition began to cease, and some of the principal gentlemen in the place employed me, so as to give me a fair prospect of doing well with regard to temporal things; yet as I thought I was called to be an instrument in the Lord's hands of saving souls, all worldly prospects were of little account to me. I prayed to God for direction, that I might not run before I was sent, and that His will, and not mine, might be done. This I wished above all things; but at the same time I saw that the saving of one soul would be of more consequence than anything else under the sun.

I had now several invitations to preach in different places; and as I was willing to go wherever I could,

I sometimes took long journeys on foot, and bore my own expenses, which I did with pleasure. After labouring in this manner upwards of two years, I was advised by the preachers who were then in the Circuit, to give up myself wholly to the work of God. I agreed so to do; and at the Conference held at London in July, 1759, I was appointed for Wiltshire Circuit. After settling my temporal affairs, I set out for my Circuit in the month of September following: so that if I am spared till September next, I shall have been twenty years employed in the Lord's vineyard; two of which I spent in Ireland; upwards of one in Scotland; and the rest in various parts of this kingdom.

But were I to give you an account of what happened in every place, respecting my labours, success, trials, persecutions, &c., my letter would swell into a small volume. Waving, therefore, these particulars, I shall only add a few words more.

I can say, to the glory of God, that I have not gone a warfare at my own charges. I mean, it was not in my own strength that I set out, or have continued labouring these many years; and I am sure it was not to enrich myself. Food and raiment were all I could expect, or ever desired, as a temporal reward. For though I have a numerous family, it has principally been supported these fourteen years out of the income of the little estate which Providence entrusted me with. And I have great reason to be thankful that I have been enabled to do the Lord's work, not of necessity, nor by constraint, but of a willing mind.

If I had desired it, I might long ago have had a settled place, and comfortable maintenance, both for myself and family; but firmly believing that I was

ordained to preach the Gospel, I willingly remained where I was called, being persuaded that I could not be more usefully employed than I then was. And I am now of opinion, that if it were right for me to choose any employment, I would rather be a Methodist preacher than anything else.

Ever since I began to preach, I have been settled in my judgment, touching the extent of the atonement; believing that Christ tasted death for every man, and that there is a day of grace for all the posterity of Adam, and a door of salvation, at which if they knock, it shall be opened unto them. Indeed, wherever I have yet laboured, there have been some visible proofs of success: and, I praise God, I still find as great a desire to promote the Redeemer's cause and interests among mankind as ever; and, if my health and strength will permit, I am resolved, through God's assistance, to preach the everlasting Gospel as long as I live.

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obedient son in the Gospel,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

DEAR SIR,

You have received the late Mr. Roberts's account of himself, which he wrote many years since. He has now finished his course, and is gone to his eternal reward. He completed the fortieth year of his labours in the Lord's vineyard, as an itinerant preacher, at the time he came to Macclesfield in September last. He was a man of great integrity and respectability. I had the satisfaction of knowing him near thirty years ago. He was then a

zealous preacher, and highly esteemed in the churches. He was generally considered as a man of sound judgment, and of an unblamable conversation; and he was not only a very useful minister of the Gospel of Christ, but was remarkably humane, and attentive to the domestic concerns of poor families, where he occasionally was, in advising, instructing, and sympathizing with them in their various troubles. By these means he became well acquainted with the common afflictions of many of his poor brethren, and knew how more effectually to be of service to them. He was an example to them in the simplicity of his manner of life, and the plainness of his diet, always choosing to give as little trouble as possible, wherever he came.

The complaint of which he died was a paralytic stroke. He was attacked with this affliction about twenty-three years since, which affected his speech very much for a time, and caused a more deliberate manner both of thought and expression ever after in his public labours. He had a return of the same complaint about a year ago. After he came to Macclesfield, and was exempted from his public labours, he was supposed to be better than he had been for some time before, and preached for us a few times.

We had often requested him to pay us a friendly visit; which he accordingly did on the 16th of December last, accompanied by his eldest daughter, when, immediately after sitting down in our house, he began to be affected, and could not articulate his words. The nature of his disorder being immediately perceived, his son was sent for, to whose house he was conveyed, where he had every attention that the skill and affection of his son could provide for him. As he continued about six days in this

afflicted state, I repeatedly saw him before he breathed his last, where the Christian and affectionate father was attended by seven of his children in his last hours. I doubt not but he knew them all, and felt in a degree the pleasure that was natural to the affectionate parent and friend. From all that we could learn, he appeared to lie passive in the hands of God, until the Lord took him, which was about two o'clock in the morning of the Sunday following.

We lamented the nature of his affliction, chiefly, because of his being deprived of speech; believing that the last testimony of his faith in Christ, his love to God, and the admonitions to his children and friends, might have had a salutary and lasting influence upon their minds. But God, who is wise and good, knoweth what is best, and cannot err in what He doeth.

JEREMIAH BRETTELL.

MACCLESFIELD, *February*, 1800.

IN the Minutes of the Conference for 1800, it is said concerning Mr. Roberts, "He was a faithful minister of Christ above forty years, having reached the period of life when human nature generally fails. His voice and memory were greatly weakened a considerable time before his death. But he was still mighty in the Scriptures, diligent in the work of the Lord, and benevolent in his temper. He was a pleasing fellow-labourer, against whose character no charge was ever brought. He lived holy, and died happy in God his Saviour."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS PAYNE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. MR. WESLEY.

WATERFORD, *March 16th*, 1781.

REV. SIR,

1. AT your request I undertake a work, of which, God knows, I am ashamed. For, when I look back on my past tempers, words, and actions, I am really amazed that I am yet alive: for surely I have deserved the lowest place in hell. I was created to be happy; but I chose the means of misery; and firmly believe myself the most unworthy of all that body of preachers with whom I am connected.

2. I was born at Nailsworth, near Stroud, in Gloucestershire, in the year 1741, of very pious and upright parents. They were by profession Particular Anabaptists; and they lived in the fear and love of God. My father laboured to train up his children in the same, seconding his precepts by his example and prayers. He kept up family devotion twice a day, reading a chapter or psalm first. And twice a day,

early and late, he spent a considerable time with God in secret. Thus he walked with God himself, and incited his children to follow him. He never spoiled the child by sparing the rod; but always remonstrated, and then corrected. And his well-timed corrections seldom failed to leave some good impressions upon us.

3. On his death-bed he gave me his dying charge, with a prayer, which I believe God sealed in heaven. As my mother was weeping, and wishing that God would spare him a little longer, he said, "Would you wish me so much evil, as to be any longer detained from the joys of heaven? Poor Tom," meaning me, "will lose a good friend to-morrow, about two o'clock." The next day, about that time, he cried out, "Lord, how long are Thy chariot-wheels a-coming?" and, within a few moments after, sweetly fell asleep.

4. I heartily thank God for a pious education, which laid a foundation for a future reformation. From the earliest period of recollection, I found the strivings of God's Spirit. I formed many good resolutions, from time to time; but quickly broke through them all: although when I was ten years old I prayed much, and desired to be truly religious. I was left under the care of a currier and leather-dresser, who carried on the shoe-making business. But, being under little restraint, and continually exposed to bad company, I gave way to youthful follies, till I left my place, without asking leave; and till my friends sent me to London. Being now among religious people who belonged to Mr. Whitefield, my good desires revived, and produced a considerable amendment in the whole tenor of my actions.

5. But I did not at all know myself. And having an inclination to see the world, I enlisted, in the year

1759, in General Burgoyne's light regiment of dragoons. But, upon examination, I was found not quite tall enough, and so was discharged from them. Being ashamed to return to my friends, I enlisted in the service of the East India Company; and was soon sent out in the "Triton" store-ship, for the island of St. Helena, on the south of Africa. I saw the island in a dream just before I enlisted. We sailed from Gravesend, in December, 1759, under the convoy of the "Ripon" man-of-war, and in company with the "Onslow" East-Indiaman, who afterward parted from us in a gale of wind. A French frigate bore down upon us in the Bay of Biscay, doubtless taking us for merchantmen. When we were preparing to engage, I was troubled at first, knowing I was not fit to die; but I soon comforted myself with the unchangeable decree. After firing a few shots, the frigate bore away. The "Ripon" chased and took her. But we saw our convoy no more, till some time after she came to St. Helena.

6. We had now a week's calm. It then blew a hurricane for three weeks without intermission. All our masts were loosened, and several sets of sails torn in a thousand pieces. Both our chain and hand pumps were kept going for a month, without any intermission. During this time one poor man fell overboard, and cried out, "A boat, for God's sake!" and sunk. A second fell down from the mast on the quarter-deck, and dashed out his brains. A third, going up to furl the mainsail, must have shared the same fate, but that, as he was falling, he caught and hung by his hands and feet to the clue-garling of the sail. But he did not give God the glory. Afterwards, as we were sailing near the equator, on a calm sea, he was scraping the ship-side, standing on one

of the half-parts, and, as usual, damning his own eyes and limbs. The captain hearing him said, "You should not curse and swear in that manner. The half-part may turn with you, and you may be drowned with an oath in your mouth." But he swore on. In less than five minutes the half-part did turn. He fell, and rose no more. The captain instantly put the ship about: but it was all in vain! This alarmed me a little: but then I thought, "It was decreed," and was easy again.

7. The day we arrived at St. Helena, I had another shock. Two men were swimming near our ship. A very large shark, which I verily believe had followed our ship four hundred miles, bit at one of them, and missed him. He cried out, "A shark!" but too late; for his comrade was immediately bit in two. Indeed, we had men killed continually. Some, getting drunk, rolled down precipices; others fell into the sea. And I verily think, half of the army, and half of the other inhabitants of the island, did not live out half their days; which often gave me very serious thoughts of the uncertainty of human life.

8. My seriousness was increased by an extraordinary occurrence, which I simply relate just as it was. One night, as I was standing sentinel at Mr. M——'s door, I heard a dreadful rattling, as if the house was all shaken to pieces, and tumbling down about my ears. Looking towards it, I saw an appearance, about the size of a six-weeks' calf, lying at the door. It rose, came towards me, and looked me in the face, passed by, returned again, and went to the door. The house shook as before, and it disappeared. A few days after, our head innkeeper, Mr. M——, told the officer of the guard, that the

same night Mrs. M—— died, he, with eight persons more sitting up, observed the house shake exceedingly; that they were greatly surprised, and carefully searched every room, but to no purpose; that not long after, there was a second shaking, as violent as the former; that a while after, the house shook a third time; and just then Mrs. M——e died.

9. I now really desired to serve God. But I had none to help me forward. I longed for some religious acquaintance; and every year, when the store-ship came from England, I diligently inquired whether any good men came in it. At length one arrived who had been educated at the Foundery-school in London. And he was once serious, but had turned again to folly. However, he was now desirous to return to God. I found, likewise, another young man, who had an earnest desire to save his soul: and we three agreed to serve God together. I now fasted and prayed, and, having a little larger income, endeavoured to help my neighbours. But this quickly puffed me up with pride, till I was suffered to fall into outward sin. This humbled me indeed: I abhorred myself, and saw the necessity of a deeper work, in order to my being happy, either in this world or in the world to come.

10. My companions and I were greatly strengthened by an uncommon trial that befell us soon after. We frequently went out at night to pray by the side of a mountain. One night, as we were walking together, and talking of the things of God, I heard a noise, and saw something in the form of a large bear pursuing me closely. My hair stood on end, and, as we were walking arm in arm, I suddenly pulled both my companions round with me. They both saw him, and one of them fainted away. It

then reared itself upon its hind-legs into the air. I said, "Satan, we are come hither to serve God; and we will do it, in spite of thee, and all the devils in hell." Instantly it sunk into the earth: we then prayed upon the very spot; and soon found ourselves strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

11. In about a week after, I spoke unadvisedly with my lips. It cut me to the heart. I went to a quarry at the foot of the mountain, fell prostrate on the earth, and cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the guilt and power of sin?" But I was a strong Calvinist, and that kept me from the blessing a long time, waiting for the irresistible call, and thinking it horrid presumption to venture upon Christ, till God compelled me by His almighty arm. Thus I waited, till I met with a German author, who convinced me of the absolute necessity of "striving to enter in at the strait gate;" of "taking the kingdom of heaven by violence;" of "laying hold of God's strength," in order to make peace with Him; of venturing my spirit, soul, and body, with all my sins, sorrows, cares, and all my wants, on the absolute mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

12. With a full purpose of doing this, I called my companions to the old spot to prayer. And while I was praying, and wrestling for Christian liberty,—

"Panting for everlasting rest,
And struggling into God,"—

I cried out, with an uncommon ecstasy of joy and astonishment, "O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise!" Being divinely assisted, I believed with my heart unto righteousness: on which, God shed abroad His love therein, and gave me the Spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father;" which Spirit witnessed with my

spirit that I was a child of God. I then could not refrain from declaring what God had done for my soul. I cried out to those about me, "Why cannot you praise God with me, and for me? I am so filled with the love of God, methinks, I am just ready to fly up to heaven, with my very body."

13. But I had a Calvinian library, which I often read. And hence I imbibed that miserable notion, that it was absolutely necessary every believer should come down from the mount. Hence I was persuaded that I must lose my first love; that I must doubt of my justification, which those wretched casuists lay down as one great mark of sincerity. For want of knowing better, I listened to these, till I lost the witness of the Spirit. I then fell into doubts concerning my justification; nay, and concerning the being of a God. I sunk deeper and deeper, till I got to my old German author again. I then found that I must strive, not only to gain, but to hold fast, the witness of the Spirit, and the hope of the Gospel; yea, that I must dispute every inch of ground with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Thus convinced, I went with renewed repentance to the throne of grace, and I found the fountain open. At two several times, it pleased God to give me so strong a discovery of His love to my soul, that it was then impossible to admit the least shadow of a doubt.

14. I now thought I could never be moved; God had made my hill so strong. I hired a little dwelling. I got a large library of books. I gathered more and more of the soldiers to join with me in fasting, praying, reading, singing, and every other means whereby we might edify each other. I began to exhort, and many were convinced of sin; some

were justified, some English backsliders were restored, who died happy in God. But soon after I was preferred to a higher rank, which was a means of my forsaking God. To please man, I did violence to my conscience, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God. But I found no peace herein. Conviction returned, and I was on the brink of despair. Many times in a day I threw myself on the bed, in unspeakable anguish of mind, seeing no door of hope, but taking it for granted I should breathe my last in horrible fear. For about a year I could not believe even the being of a God. I thought, if there was such a God as the Scripture speaks of, He would either have saved or damned me before now. I do not know that I slept one whole night, for thirteen months together; nor indeed one whole hour, without some dreadful dream presaging the wrath to come. To complete my distress, and make me perfectly miserable, the ungodly who denied, and the Pharisees who despised, all heart-religion, were continually laughing me to scorn; crying, "Ha! ha! so would we have it. Where is our reprover now?"

15. One man on the parade, to provoke me, called upon the devil to d—n his Maker. Immediately a horror fell upon him, and from that hour he had no rest, day or night, till he made an open confession to a magistrate, that seven years before he had murdered a soldier, whose apparition followed him wherever he was. Upon this confession, judicially repeated, he was condemned to die. When under sentence he sent for me, and begged I would converse and pray with him, which (with the leave both of the governor and chaplain) I did till the day of his execution. He then declared, "This is the best day I ever saw. This is my wedding-day.

I am married to Christ ; I am going to heaven, to praise Him to all eternity."

16. I was now promoted again. I had five different offices, and a large revenue therefrom. But as business increased, religion wore off; till, to avoid running into more sin, I married. My wife's mother was one of the most pious women in the island. But my wife's religion consisted in going to church, and then running a continual round of pleasure, of eating and drinking, dressing, playing, dancing, singing. Indeed, we both swam down the stream together: for I was afraid to think; I did not dare to meet my own conscience; and endeavoured to stifle my own convictions with business, and with frantic mirth. Yet sometimes I could not help thinking; and my convictions were then so keen, that I was many times under strong temptation to put an end to my own life. Perhaps I should have done it, but for a dream which I had a little before. I thought I saw myself standing on the summit of a frightful precipice; whence I was suddenly hurled down headlong through the air, expecting every moment to be dashed in pieces; when I was turned into a white dove, and flew up again.

17. About this time I saw, at a friend's house, two volumes extracted from Mr. Law's works, and a volume of your sermons. Hence my convictions returned stronger than ever. I sincerely and deeply lamented my grievous fall: my heart was broken in pieces, for my repeated and aggravated sins against so good a God; and I sincerely prayed, that He would send me any kind of affliction which would bring me back to Himself. I saw prosperity had ruined me; and cared not what I suffered, so I

might once again love and serve God. And I referred it wholly to Him, to use whatever means He saw fit, in His adorable providence. At the same time I had a vehement desire to hear, once more, the genuine Gospel of Christ.

18. One night I started in my sleep, and waked my wife, saying, "Peggy, I shall be obliged to leave you, and to go to England." She said, "It is only a foolish dream : go to sleep again." I endeavoured so to do, but could not, this being so strongly impressed on my mind. Not long after, I disobliged some of my superiors by the just discharge of my duty. In consequence of this, I received orders to return to England ; the man I saw in my dream pushing me off the precipice, being the very man who bore false witness against me, out of fear of the governor, who cursed, and drove away those that came to give evidence in my favour. I saw the hand of God herein, and acquiesced in His providence.

19. I came to England, and preferred a petition to the honourable East India Company. But they did not answer it ; as, indeed, I had not with me the proper evidences to support it. I left my wife and child behind, and she was breeding with another. She did not desire to come with me ; nor did I then desire that she should. I remained in London, waiting for the arrival of some of my evidences, till I had spent almost all my money, having only a few shillings left. I could not now tell what to do, as I had not one friend in London ; till, hearing of you, sir, I found a desire to have some conversation with you. I went to the Foundery ; but, instead of you, met with Mr. Jaco. I told him my situation and circumstances. He said, "I can do nothing for you." I asked, if he knew of any under-clerk's

place, that I could get, till Providence cleared my way. He said, "No." I left him; but was not humbled enough yet for God to lift me up.

20. I said to myself, "I have been a soldier, and I will be so again." I could not murmur nor repine; having a deep sense of my backsliding from God, and being fully convinced that although His ways are often past finding out, yet He does all things well, and for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. I enlisted in the fifteenth regiment of foot, and was immediately made clerk of the regiment. I should have been further preferred; but I was too religious: I was not like other men. Indeed, I do not know that we had three men in the whole regiment who pretended to any religion at all. I had now again a few opportunities of calling sinners to repentance. I went home to Nailsworth upon a furlough, and began exhorting the people to turn to God. I did the same at Stroud, then at Cirencester, and afterwards at other places. Here my former sentiments were shaken, and I began to halt between two opinions. At length the gracious providence of God brought me to Leeds, in Yorkshire. Here I found such a large body of affectionate people as I never saw before, and some of them desired me to preach; but my officers threatened me that, if I did, I should be tried by a court-martial; and I still doubted my call to preach: so I determined to take this method, never to preach unless invited to it, and then to observe whether there was any fruit.

21. Soon after, one of our soldiers told Mrs. Walsh, that they had a preacher in their regiment. She sent for me, and desired me to give an exhortation. I did so; and, contrary to my expectation, my

officers were so far from punishing me, that they gave me all the liberty I could desire. And it pleased God to employ me as an instrument of awakening and converting several souls. I preached many times in the streets of Leeds. Mr. Mitchell then sent for me, and asked me, "For whom do you preach?" I said, "For Christ, in order to convert sinners to Him." He invited me to preach in your preaching-house, which I did many times. And I frequently went into the Circuit for him, and for Mr. Robert Roberts, who were glad to have sinners converted to God, whatever instruments He was pleased to make use of. And it was here that, by reading and considering yours, Mr. Fletcher's, and Mr. Sellon's works, I was entirely delivered from the whole hypothesis of absolute predestination. And so, I am firmly persuaded, will every sensible man be, who has a real desire to know the whole truth of God, and then gives them a fair reading, with frequent and fervent prayer.

22. It was now that the thought of my wife and children lay upon my mind. And I saw no way, either for me to escape from the army, or them from St. Helena. But nothing is too hard for God. He first made a way for me. My colonel demanding thirty guineas for my discharge, it was soon raised and paid. Being now once more a free man, I desired to join with the people called Methodists. I saw (to begin with smaller things) that wherever they came, they promoted, (1.) Cleanliness, industry, frugality, and economy: (2.) Loyalty, conscientious subjection to the king, and all that are in authority: and, (3.) Real, vital religion, which was well nigh banished from the earth.

23. I was received upon trial at the Leeds Con-

ference, in the year 1772. Thence I was sent to London, where the sensible Methodists were so kind as to bear with my weaknesses; and they were not a few. I bless God that I was stationed here for my improvement. And even here, it pleased God that my labour was not in vain. You was then pleased to send me to Ireland, to take off my rough military edge, and to break me thoroughly to the work, on the rough mountains of the north. The damp, dirty, smoky cabins of Ulster were a good trial for me for the present. But what makes double amends for all these inconveniences to any preacher who loves the work of God, is, that our people here are in general the most zealous, lively, affectionate Christians we have in the kingdom.

24. When I had been a little above a year in Ireland, my wife, who was before unwilling to leave home, as well as afraid of a sea-voyage, and of venturing into the northern climate, wrote me word that her father and mother were dead, and that she was willing to leave St. Helena, and not afraid either of a sea-voyage or of a cold climate. I informed you of this; and you was pleased to make application to the East India Company, who generously ordered my family to be brought to England, with every needful accommodation, at their own charge. By the blessing of God, they arrived safe. You was pleased to send my little boy to Kingswood School, and my little girl to Publow; and to send me word, not to take any thought or care about them. After a while you sent over my wife to me. This has proved an unspeakable blessing to her. She has been convinced of sin, converted to God, and I trust made pure in heart.

25. As to myself, I have been many times so

unfaithful to the grace and gifts wherewith God has entrusted me, that I abhor myself in dust and ashes, as an unprofitable servant. Yet this I can say from the ground of my heart, I am not at all careful where or how long I live in this world, so I may answer the end of my being; so I may have the testimony of my conscience, that I do all to the glory of God. For I know, that to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I fear God, and uniformly endeavour to work righteousness. I believe that God is both able and willing to cleanse me from all unrighteousness: and I lie before Him as clay in the hands of the potter, to be just what He would have me to be; as holy and as happy as my nature and state can bear. I am not afraid of being too holy; but I believe it is my privilege to be all-holy, in the very complexion of my soul, in all my tempers, thoughts, words, and actions. I am convinced that grace is stronger than sin, and that Christ is stronger than the devil; and that Gospel liberty implies a deliverance from the guilt, power, and nature of sin, into peace, life, love, and holiness. I can say farther, that though I do not yet fully enjoy these inestimable blessings, yet God is pleased to own my weak labours, so that more and more sinners are converted to God every time I go my circuit.

26. And now what shall I render to the Lord for all the benefits that He has done unto me? I can only praise Him as long as I live, and be telling of all His wondrous works. Praise the Lord, then, O my soul! and let all within me praise His holy name!

Dear Sir, blot out or keep in just what you please of this narrative; and in so doing you will oblige

Your son in the Gospel,

THOMAS PAYNE.

*A short Account of the Death of Mr. Thomas Payne,
who departed this Life January 6th, 1783.*

FROM a principle of affection to our deceased brother, I think it my duty to add something to the account already given in the year 1781. And I am more particularly inclined to this, as it contains a little account of the Lord's gracious dealings with His servant, in his sickness and death.

In the beginning of his illness, he had deep impressions on his mind, that this affliction was unto death: the thought of which, he often said, was a reviving cordial to him.

As his bodily weakness increased, his desire after full sanctification increased; for which his soul was deeply engaged in constant, mighty prayer.

About two months before his death, the enemy was permitted to assault him many ways; but one temptation in particular was very severe for the time it lasted, which was to doubt the being of a God. But he was soon delivered from it. After which he had much communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

About a fortnight before he died, he was led to such a discovery of himself as he never had before: even all the sins he had ever committed were presented to him, attended with such a deep sense of his weakness and blindness as made him exceedingly tremble. Above all, what gave him the greatest pain was, that he had done the work of the Lord, in many instances, so much in his own warm spirit, and not in the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

This was attended with such a sight of the majesty and holiness of God, and the excellency of His glory,

as excited a vehement cry in his heart for the coming of Jesus, to make him fully meet for the enjoyment of Himself. And our Lord soon heard him: his faith beheld the great Atonement, on which he received a whole Saviour, who applied the all-cleansing blood. He was now filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and experienced that complete salvation he had so long preached to others.

From this time his conversation was truly in heaven: his exhortations and persuasions to all that came near him, to devote themselves entirely to God, were delivered in such a powerful manner as made deep impressions on every heart.

The day before his death, when Mr. Rankin called to see him, his soul was truly comfortable. And after some conversation concerning the goodness of God to him, he said, "You are going to preach: tell the people, tell the societies, I die a witness of the truth I have preached to others. And I now solemnly declare, I believe the doctrine taught by the Methodists; and that the discipline they enforce is, above all others, the best calculated to bring sinners to God, and to keep them close to Him." During the night, he frequently spoke of the love and power of God to his soul; waiting patiently for the coming of his Lord.

About an hour before he departed, Mrs. Payne, seeing him in agony, said, "My dear, you appear as if your heart was breaking." He replied, "Let it break! Let it break! But it is hard work to die!" After this he was very calm, and appeared to possess great serenity of mind. But now the hour of release came, when he turned his eyes towards Mrs. Thomas, and with a piercing yet pleasing look said, "Lord, have mercy! Jesus, save to the utter-

most! to the very uttermost!" And soon after, while we were commending his soul to God, he fell asleep in Jesus.

Thus departed this Christian hero, this valiant soldier of Christ; who counted not his life dear to him, so he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received from the Lord.

CHARLES BOONE.

March 13th, 1783.

THE following letter will serve further to show what manner of spirit Mr. Payne was of, and the success which attended his ministry:—

“BALLICUMBER, *July 27th, 1779.*

“REV. SIR,

“LAST Wednesday I went to Balliboy, and was received by the family of the D——’s, who are the leading men of the whole country. I preached to near five hundred persons, many of whom are convinced of sin, while the prejudices of hundreds more are removed.

“The next day I went from Balliboy to Pallace, where I preached once before in the old church. I preached now at four different houses of the most creditable people in the country, and all in the compass of two miles. I was received hospitably, and each of these houses is now open to receive the next preachers that come.

“Mr. M., worth three thousand a year, heard me, and invited me to his house, where I dined last Sunday. He inquired into the nature of our doctrine and discipline. On telling him all I knew, he

seemed quite satisfied, and gave me a general invitation to his house, and also told me that we ought to be encouraged.

“I came yesterday to this town, where there are seven convinced of sin, and one converted. I preached here last night; and for the first time Mr. A., the owner of the whole town, came to hear me. When preaching was over, he invited me home, and gave me a general invitation to his town and house; he also telling me that we ought to be encouraged.

“On the whole, I have this year, in a particular manner, opposed the trifling and worldly-mindedness of the rich Methodists, and thereby lost the favour of many of them; but I have gained the friendship of other rich men, and have planted the Gospel in many new places. I have been a visible means in the hands of God of convincing above a hundred sinners, and of converting near twenty. As to myself, I am more than ever alive to God, and zealous in His cause. I fear nothing but my own heart. I am anxious for nothing but to live to the glory of God.

“To this end an interest in your prayers will greatly oblige, Rev. Sir,

“Your friend and fellow-labourer,

“THOMAS PAYNE.”

Upon this letter Mr. Wesley remarks, “Mr. Payne, who had been in the army for many years, was a plain, honest, zealous man; fearing neither men nor devils. And as he bore down all opposers while he lived, so in death he triumphed over his last enemy, being more than conqueror through Him who had loved him.”

THE LIFE
OF
MR. RICHARD RODDA.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I WAS born in the year of our Lord 1743, in the parish of Sancreed, in the county of Cornwall. My parents had no great share of this world's goods ; yet were esteemed by all who knew them for their honesty and industry. My mother feared God ; but, being a stranger to His method of justifying sinners, she went about to establish her own righteousness.

When the Methodists came into Cornwall preaching repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, she was whole, and needed not the Physician. And as evil reports were soon spread abroad concerning the Methodists, she and my father readily believed all that was said against them. Accordingly, they kept their distance, and considered them as enemies both to Church and State.

However, my sister, who was the eldest of ten

children, ventured to hear ; and God fastened His word in her conscience, as a nail in a sure place. On this she sunk down at the feet of Jesus and implored mercy, who in a short time turned her sorrow into joy. As this change was visible, it induced my mother to hear for herself. It was not long before God stripped her of her self-righteousness. His arrows drank up her spirits, and His hand pressed her sore. For three weeks she cried unto the Lord, as out of the deep ; at the end of which, being on the brink of despair, He set her soul at liberty in a moment, and enabled her to say, "Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me!" From this time she was diligent in the means of grace, and did what she could to bring up her children in the fear of God.

One of the first things I remember was, my old grandmother praying to God with lifted hands and eyes, as she passed into the other world.

When I was about four years old, as I was lying on the ground, and looking up to heaven, I thought I saw the form of a large tree. While I gazed on it, something inwardly said, "That is the tree of life." This was before I could read, or even knew a letter.

When I was six years of age, the Spirit of God frequently strove with me ; and sometimes I was so distressed, I knew not what to do. Yet I learned my book very well ; and could repeat to my parents at night great part of what I had read by day.

About the year 1750 the Gospel was preached in my father's house. I loved to hear it, and strove to get as near the preacher as I could. Soon after this my mother fell into a deep consumption. She was brought so low that she could not walk across the room. After many things had been tried in vain, she was perfectly restored by making a hole in the

ground, and breathing into it for a quarter of an hour every morning.

When I was seven years old, I felt the drawings of the Father, and the operation of His blessed Spirit on my heart. The preachers that came to our house often spoke to me concerning my soul; and their instructions were not in vain: they often distilled on my heart as dew on the tender herbs. But after this I lived in a family which had not so much as the form of godliness. And as they encouraged me in every vice, my good desires and serious impressions so far vanished, that I could laugh, and tell lies, without fear or remorse.

One day, as I was riding on full gallop in company with several others, my horse threw me over his head, and then quite leaped over me; and though another horse coming close behind did the same, yet I received no hurt! Surely the tender mercy of God preserved me, or I had gone quick into the pit! Soon after this, the kind providence of God brought me back to my father's house, and I was sent to work in the tin-mines. From this time God began to work effectually on my heart.

In the year 1756 the Lord showed me that my inward parts were very wickedness. I saw that my heart was a sink of pollution, and that my past life condemned me. When I heard a certain preacher in St. Just's, I thought, as soon as he began, he could not have much to say; but before he had done, I thought he kept his eye continually on me, while everything he said seemed to point at me. I could hardly bear it, and had some thoughts of moving to another part of the house, where he might not see me. But I soon found it was God who was applying His word to my heart.

From this time strong convictions followed me : and though I was often drawn away with sinful companions, yet my conscience terrified me, and drove me to the feet of Christ to implore forgiveness. My mother greatly helped me by her prayers and admonitions ; as did also my two elder brothers, who about this time found peace with God.

I now applied to Mr. Jaco for admission into the society. He gave me leave to meet, but only as a probationer : I suppose, because he thought me too young to be admitted. Nevertheless, I constantly met in class ; and some time after, when you, sir, called over the society at Newlyn, I was received into the Connexion.

I was near two years seeking rest for my soul. Sometimes I thought, God would never show me His mercy ; at others, I hoped He would. Sometimes I was alarmed by terrors : at others, I was drawn by love. God is witness how often I have watered my pillow with tears, and risen at midnight to pour out my soul before Him ! One time in particular, I was in such trouble that I thought God was frowning over me, and that hell moved from beneath to meet me. Once a very wicked boy being in company with me, as I walked the road, I was constrained to fall on my knees, and cry aloud for mercy ; for every step I took, I feared I should drop into everlasting burnings.

About the beginning of June, 1758, while I was praying in my father's house, and earnestly entreating God to write forgiveness on my heart, the following words darted into my soul : " Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." In that instant my burden was removed, and my soul was filled with peace and joy. But I soon doubted whether this was what many termed "justification ;" and as

I had always a fear of deceiving myself, the enemy soon reasoned me out of my happiness, and my soul seemed as far from the blessing as ever.

On the 11th of that month, while Benjamin Trembath was praying by me, God gave me a clear sense of His forgiving love. There was not the least doubt remaining of my acceptance through the Beloved. For many days and weeks I was enabled to rejoice in God my Saviour. Every duty was profitable, as it conveyed to me fresh tokens of the Divine favour. My understanding was opened to behold the power, wisdom, and goodness of God; in creating, upholding, and governing the world. I saw that the whole earth was full of His majesty and glory. But what most astonished me was, the wondrous greatness of redeeming love. To behold the Ancient of days become an infant! the Filler of immensity, contracted to a span! the Lord of heaven and earth, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and, after fulfilling all righteousness, bowing His blessed head on the cross, to save His avowed enemies! these considerations filled me with love and gratitude, which I expressed in the following lines:—

Praise God, my soul, whose wondrous love
Hath drawn thy thoughts to things above,

Where Jesus ever reigns:
Let every sinful, wand'ring thought
Be into full subjection brought,
Till freed from sin's remains.

When pure, and perfected in love,
O, may I never, never rove
From Christ, my living Head:
But steadfast and unshaken stand,
Obedient to my Lord's command,
While by His Spirit led.

Among the little, happy flock,
Who sit beneath their guardian Rock,
Will I take up my rest :
My Shepherd's voice my soul shall hear,
And, freed from doubts and slavish fear,
Shall lean upon His breast.

His loving arms, extended wide,
Shall press me to His wounded side,
Nor let me thence depart ;
But fill my soul with joy and peace,
And all the fruits of righteousness
Shall flourish in my heart.

The heavenly spices of His grace
Do sweetly now perfume the place
Where Satan had his seat :
Jesus hath spoil'd the powers of hell,
And lo ! I now for ever dwell
Triumphant at His feet !

Here will I lie, nor ever move,
Till Christ my Lord shall say, " My love,
Come up, and dwell with Me : "
Then I on wings of love shall rise,
And reign with Him above the skies,
To all eternity.

Many times that text ran in my mind, " I shall never be moved ; the Lord of His goodness hath made my hill so strong." I thought my enemies were all dead, and that my warfare was accomplished. How little did I know at that time of the Christian conflict, or the deep import of these words, " Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but to suffer for His sake ! "

Through unwatchfulness I fell into levity, (a besetting evil,) and Satan strove to tear away my shield ; but though God suffered him not to do it, yet my joy was greatly damped. My unwatchfulness cost me many an aching heart ; and I found I

had most need to watch when in company with professors ; where, not suspecting harm, I was often overtaken before I was aware.

About the year 1759, when I was forty fathoms under ground, by a miracle I was saved from being drowned in three fathoms of water. O the tender mercy of God in preserving me ! Surely the angel of His presence saved me ; through whose help I continue unto this day !

Not long after, I was seized with a fever, and brought very near the gates of death. My soul longed to take her flight, and struggled, like a bird in a cage, to obtain its liberty.

One day my friends thought I was dead, and one of my brothers informed my mother that I was passed into the other world. And I thought myself that my soul had actually left the body, and was mounting upwards, like a bird in the air. I saw with the eyes of my mind such glory as cannot be expressed. I saw the eternal Sun of Righteousness shining more glorious than the sun in his meridian lustre. Indeed, I had such views of God and glory, as I never had before or since. My mother, on hearing that I was dead, ran to the bed, and raised me up in her arms. After some time I again began to breathe ; but the impression it left will never be obliterated. It was much against my wish that I was again restored to life ; for it was the longing desire of my soul to depart, and to be with Christ, of which I had full assurance.

The first time I went abroad, after my recovery, I was impressed to serve in His Majesty's navy. I pleaded my youth and my present weakness. While I was speaking, an honest Quaker came by, and addressed himself to the mayor as follows :—

QUAKER.—What art thou going to do with that lad?

MAYOR.—Send him to serve His Majesty.

Q.—There are others more fit for the service, yea, a hundred in this town: send them; send idle, disorderly persons, not honest men's sons who live by their diligence and frugality.

M.—The king must have men: if we cannot get seamen, we must take others.

Q.—Look upon that lad: thou mayest read innocence in his countenance.

M.—He will look much better after he has been six months at sea; and in time he will be a captain.

Q.—Let him go home: there are men enough to be got besides him.

After a few more words, the mayor told me to make haste home.

I admire the kindness of the Most High in this. Many of my neighbours were sent from their native land, and carried to the Havannah; but God put it into the mind of that good old Friend to speak for me, and thereby to procure me my liberty.

About this time the Lord opened the mouth of one of my brothers to speak in public. The first time I heard him, he spoke from the words of good old Simeon: "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." That night the farmer's house where he had preached took fire, and was burned; but the family were saved, so as by fire.

When I was about twenty years of age, some Christian friends desired me to go to prayer; for as yet I had not prayed much in public. This was a cross to me; but when my mother urged me, I broke through. I have no doubt but the gracious Spirit helped my infirmities, and enabled me to ask

those things that were agreeable to the will of God. I was encouraged to go on ; and as we had family prayer for many years, I often assisted in the performance of that duty. Soon after I was desired to pray again in public, and after much importunity I consented.

The doctrine of Christian perfection was now preached among us, and numbers professed they had attained the blessing. I had not the least doubt of the testimony of several, as their whole behaviour agreed with their profession. I believed the doctrine, and my soul longed to experience it. I prayed that every thought and desire might centre in God. While my eldest brother and I were pouring out our souls to God for this blessing, the Lord poured out His Spirit upon us ; every heart present appeared like melting wax before the fire ; and in that hour, God gave my mother a testimony that He had cleansed her from all unrighteousness ; which I trust she retains to this day.

My soul was now on full stretch after the blessing. I not only believed it attainable, but that I should attain it : therefore I constantly expected that Christ would come to cleanse and keep my heart. Accordingly, one Saturday night, I came to the class, and resolved not to depart till mine eyes had seen this great salvation. After I had entered the room, my heart seemed as hard as a stone ; but I was not discouraged. All my prayer was, " Lord, create in me a clean heart, and renew in me a right spirit." The mighty power of God descended upon me ; my heart was emptied of every evil, and Jesus took up all the room. I could no longer refrain from telling what God had done for my soul. My heart was filled with love and joy, and my lips praised Him.

For three weeks I enjoyed constant fellowship with God; there was not a cloud on my mind; I walked in the light, and often scarce felt the ground on which I trod. I never expected to feel a wandering thought more. But at the end of three weeks I felt my thoughts wander, and then inferred I had lost the blessing; and had hard work to retain what I had received even in justification.

Not long after this, I was greatly harassed with blasphemous thoughts; but my soul abhorred them. The devil, likewise, tempted me to destroy myself. One day, when I had a razor in my hand, he told me that was a fit instrument for the purpose: he likewise added, if I did, I should be happy for ever. But something within answered, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." My struggle was so great, I thought the blood would have started through my nose, eyes, and ears. At length I threw the razor on the ground, and fell on my knees. God soon heard me, and rebuked the destroyer.

All the time I had these sore conflicts, God secretly called on me to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come; but in this I was disobedient. The language of my heart was, "Send by whom Thou wilt, but send not me." It was about this part of my life the hand of the Lord was more visible in preserving me than in any other. I shall mention two or three instances.

One day I was standing in a tin-pit, about eight yards from the top, and four from the bottom; the men above were drawing up a piece of timber, the end of which pulled a stone out of the brink of the pit. The men above cried out, on which I leaned my head a little forward, and the stone fell between

my shoulders. In that instant I fell backwards, and dropped down four yards below me. And as I fell among some small stones, my back and neck were hurt; but, blessed be God, I had no bones broken, nor any other damage but what I recovered in two or three days. Those who saw me fall expected my brains were dashed out. But the kind hand of God lengthened the thread of life. O, how great is His goodness!

Some time after, I had another proof of God's mercy and goodness. I was one day standing on what we call in Cornwall "a borough of attle," which filled an old tin-pit, and stood a considerable height from the surface of the earth. While I was standing on its top, it sunk in an instant under my feet; and I literally went down quick into the pit. The attle immediately followed me, and covered my head; but I went down till I came where a miner was working, who was greatly surprised to see me. If I had been retarded in my passage, I must have been inevitably suffocated. Glory be to God, I received no damage!

But the greatest deliverance happened soon after this. One day, as I was working in the bottom of a pit, about ten yards deep, I laid aside my tool, and fell on my knees, and found uncommon enlargement in prayer. In less than two minutes the ground fell in. A very large stone fell before me, which rose higher than my head. Two others fell, one on my right side, and the other on my left; these, likewise, rose above my head. A fourth fell like a cover, and rested on the top of the others, about four inches above my head. Some scores of small ones fell behind on my legs and feet; while others fell on the cover that was over me. Here I was shut up as in a prison. When my father came to the brink of the

pit, and found me buried, he fell a-weeping. But when he found I was alive, he told me the whole pit would fill to the top. I desired him to go out of the reach of danger. I was a little surprised at first; but it was soon gone. As the stones were large and hollow, I had sufficient room to breathe. When he perceived that no more stones fell, he got help, and by degrees removed some of the large stones; and, after cutting my shoes from my feet, I was got out without receiving the least injury. I cannot help admiring the providence of God in the following particulars:—

1. I was praying at the time this happened.
2. I was kneeling. Had I been standing, I should have been crushed to pieces; had I been sitting, my legs would have been broken with the large stone which fell before me.
3. They fell in an instant. Had I heard them coming, probably I should have risen from my knees; and then the stone which fell like a cover would have dashed out my brains.
4. Three large stones fell, one before me, and one on each side; and only small ones behind on my legs. Had a large one fallen there, my legs would have been broken into shivers.
5. The three large ones that fell were a few inches higher than my head, and were instantly covered with another large one. Had they been a few inches lower, the last would certainly have killed me in a moment. Surely this preservation was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in my eyes!

One Lord's day we expected a travelling preacher. The people were gathered together from various parts, when word was brought that he could not come. On hearing this, I was desired to stand up,

and speak to the people. The conflict in my breast was very strong; and if my friends had observed my countenance, they could not help seeing it. But I refused to open my mouth. Presently a horrid gloom overwhelmed me. I knew not where to go, or what to do. I feared God would send me down quick into the pit. I came home greatly distressed; and while walking in the fields, filled with confusion and horror, I feebly said, "Lord, if it be Thy will that such a worm should speak Thy word, chasten my body, but save my soul." I was instantly seized in every part. My head was sick, and my heart faint. My feet and legs were so enfeebled, they could scarce support my body; I fell on the ground, and laid my mouth in the dust, while the hand of the Almighty pressed me sore. After a time, I faintly said, "Lord, if Thou wilt restore me, my mouth shall show forth Thy praise; I will this night begin in the family." In an instant the distress was removed, both from my body and mind, and I was filled with peace and love.

When I returned to the house, the enemy told me to put off speaking a day or two longer. But I attended to the counsel of the wise man: "When thou vowest a vow unto the Lord, take care and perform it." Accordingly, I exhorted that night, for the first time, which was in my father's house. Soon after I was desired to exhort in the society; and then, by their advice, I did it in public.

The first time I attempted to preach, I was exceedingly anxious about dividing the word in a proper manner. And as I was a mile from the preaching-house, I walked a by-road, that no one might disturb my thoughts, or turn off my mind from the subject. As I went along, I began to preach to myself, and

continued so to do until I came near the preaching-house. But how was I disappointed, when I took the same words before the congregation! Alas! all my fine skeleton vanished from my sight, and I was filled with shame and confusion.

I believe this would have cured me of taking another text, if my Christian friends had not pressed me to a second trial; and as I did not lean to my own understanding, God was pleased out of the mouth of the weak to ordain strength.

Other societies now invited me to preach to them. When I went, God was with me of a truth; several were convinced of sin, and some found peace.

In the parish of Morva, three or four have fallen to the ground under a sermon, and groaned to God for mercy. Many who had backslidden returned unto God, who healed their backslidings, and loved them freely. The travelling preachers, who had forsaken them, again visited them; and some who were then restored are now in Abraham's bosom.

Mr. Rankin, who was the assistant, at the Quarterly-Meeting desired me to inform the company why I desired to preach. I rose trembling, and with many tears said, "When you came first into the Round, I gave you an account of my conversion, and my call to this work. Since that, I have spoken at several places, and here are some present who have heard me. They are at liberty to speak what they think." On this, two or three grave men arose, and represented me in a very favourable light. Mr. Rankin admitted they were proper judges, and told me I should preach and exhort on Sundays, so as to return the same night. From this time I frequently, on the Sabbath, travelled many miles on foot, preached three times, and returned home about

ten at night. Many times in my going out, and returning home, I have prostrated myself on the ground, and lifted up my heart to God for His blessing on my endeavours, and often found Him benignly near. Glory be to His name for ever !

One of my brothers, who was labouring in the vineyard, often refreshed my soul by his letters : but when he wrote of settling, it filled me with grief ; for I thought, after setting his hand to the plough, he ought never to look back. But some difference that happened between him and a troublesome man, in the town of Pembroke, caused him to decline the itinerant life. He came to Cornwall, and in a little time we both sailed for Wales. Here I tarried four or five weeks, and preached in various parts ; and I hope all I said was not in vain.

I returned, and continued working at my business a full year ; and then with my youngest brother I went to Wales again. On the 10th of July, 1768, I was married to E—— S——. My mind was very serious at that time, from which my mother-in-law concluded I was in a decline ; but having obtained help from God, I continue to this day. I returned to Cornwall with my wife, about the beginning of August. We received the travelling preachers near twelve months. Business again called me into Wales : here, sir, I met with you. And as you wanted a preacher for Glamorganshire Circuit, I freely offered my service, which you accepted. I then bought a horse, &c., out of my own money, and made all the haste I could into my Round.

Here I found great favour in the eyes of the people, and was in more danger from their smiles than their frowns. The preacher that was with me was also exceedingly kind ; so that my time glided

on smoothly. In April I returned to Cornwall, and brought my wife back with me into Wales.

When Mr. Dempster left me in the Circuit, while he went to the Conference, I preached at two new places, lying between Pembroke-Ferry and Haverfordwest. At the last of these places a little society was formed; and I hope a few of them continue to this day.

The next year I spent partly in Pembrokeshire, and partly in Brecknockshire and Radnorshire. In this round I attempted to enlarge our borders. In the strength of the Lord, I went to Bishop's Castle, a town wicked to a proverb. I had nobody with me; but the Lord was with me of a truth. I put my horse up at an inn, and wrote a lesson for the crier. I gave him this and the money at the same time: after reading the notice, he began to make some scruples. I told him he had taken my money, and therefore I insisted that he would do his duty. Accordingly, he published me to preach under the town-hall, the most public and convenient place in the town. At the time appointed, hundreds flocked to hear. I stood on the steps, and preached from Amos v. 6. I bless God, He did not let me want matter, manner, or liberty! Some threw their hats in my face; but that did not hinder me from proceeding. The tears trickled down many faces; and after I had done, five or six came round me, and begged I would come again. I believe the power of the Highest reached many hearts; and had my successors followed the blow, the kingdom of Satan might have been shaken in that wicked town.

The next day I rode thirty or forty miles to Tenbury, in Worcestershire. The first time I came to this place, Mr. G—— was there, intending to preach

in the house of Miss H——, who had removed thither with an intent to keep a boarding-school. Before he began he informed the congregation, that if any of them misbehaved he should take the liberty to stop his preaching, and put them out of doors. In a short time, some of them began to make a great noise: accordingly, he came down to fulfil his promise, laid hold on one of them, and was putting him out, when twenty more surrounded him; and if the good women of the house had not interposed, I know not what the consequence would have been. However, we soon got all the mob out of doors, and then ended our meeting in peace.

The second time I came, the people cried out, I was come to preach against the Church. I know not when I have attempted to preach in greater confusion. They brought gunpowder with them, and almost filled the place with the smoke of it. It happened, a very rough man, who had come out of the country, came that night to hear preaching. He sat near me, and had a large bludgeon in his hand. As soon as he heard the explosion of the gunpowder, he rose from his seat, and with his mouth full of oaths said, he would knock the brains of the persons out who had made the disturbance. I begged of him, if he was my friend, to lay aside that weapon: after some time he seemed more pacified.

Before I came the second time, a great part of the church fell down; but as it happened on a week-day, no person was hurt. I think it was the Sunday after, that the minister, whose name was David, stood on a part of the ruins, and took for his text, "Lord, remember David, and all his troubles." (Psalm cxxxii. 1.) He spoke of the tender care and sparing mercy of God, in not permitting the church

to fall when the people were in it. The tenderness of his own heart appeared by the tears flowing plentifully down his cheeks. But while he wept, the hardened congregation laughed! The reason some assigned for their behaviour was, "The p[arson] had made too free with the bottle."

When I came the third time, I was resolved to preach abroad; and, that all the town might have notice, I sent for the crier, who was unwilling to publish it, until I gave him a double fee. About half an hour before the time, a mob assembled before the house where I was: they saw me through the window, and cried out, "There he is." I went to the window, threw up the sash, and said, "I am here, and will be with you soon." When the time came, I went out in the strength of the Lord. Some of them pelted me with dirt and broken tiles; but they neither hurt me nor hindered me. Before I ended my sermon, some of the mob got a piece of wood dressed like a man. They put an old wig on its head, and danced it up and down before me; but I looked up to God, and was preserved from levity. The mob, from this time, became more civilized: but I have not heard, whether there was any Methodist preaching in the town since I left it.

The next day I rode to the city of Hereford. The house we used to preach in being very small, and in an obscure part of the city, I resolved to preach out of doors here also. To that end I walked through the city to find the most convenient place; and when the hour came, I stood with my back against St. Nicholas's church. While I sung a hymn, numbers flocked together, among whom were several gentlemen, and two or three clergymen. I was soon accosted by a baker, who said I was come to preach

against the Church. He was very passionate; but the Lord endued me with patience. I went on, and he soon went away.

After this, some made an attempt to throw a pail of milk on me; but others prevented them. However, before I had done, a wicked man, whose nickname was Bacon, gathered dirt out of the kennel, and threw it in my face and eyes. It so besmeared me, that I could proceed no farther. I then walked to the house of a justice of the peace: a man of unblemished character. He came to the door, and desired me to walk in, and said he was sorry for the ill-usage I had received; and added, "This is a very wicked place," &c. I said, "You see, sir, I have been ill-used; and therefore I hope you will do me justice." He said, "Why did you not apply to the mayor?" I answered, I had no objection against applying to him; but I inquired for the nearest justice. He said, "The city is divided into wards, and each magistrate has his ward." I answered, "I presume, as His Majesty's commissioner of the peace, you are empowered to restore and keep the peace throughout the city." He said, "That is true. I am no enemy to religious people of whatever denomination."

I said, "The Methodists are a people in being near forty years: they are loyal subjects; they are inoffensive, and desire to live peaceably with all men." He then asked, "By what law do you expect satisfaction?" I answered, "By a law made in the first year of the reign of William and Mary, called the Toleration Act." He asked, "Have you taken the oaths?" I said, "Yes;" and showed him my certificate. He read it, and said, "If you insist on it, I will send the man that disturbed you to goal; but if I do, as he has a wife and several

children, these must come on the town. Therefore, if you will show him lenity this time, I will take care of him in future." I answered, "I shall submit to your judgment in the affair. I insist on no damage for what is past: I only desire that in future I may preach the Gospel in peace." He said he was glad to find I was of a pacific disposition; that he would have the man before him the next morning, and threaten him; and that if ever he disturbed me again, he would send him to gaol forthwith. I then returned him thanks, and departed; and believe he kept his word; seeing that man never hindered me after.

I spent the next year in Cornwall with great satisfaction, and the Lord visited many with His great salvation. On Easter-day, in the morning, I preached at Mevagizze. The power of God was present, both to wound and to heal. The cries and prayers of some, and the praise of others, constrained me, two or three times, to break off preaching, and join with them in prayer and praise. Though I am no advocate for noisy assemblies, yet I think there are times when people cannot help roaring for the disquietude of their souls; and others, when they cannot refrain from praising God aloud for all the great things He hath done for them.

From thence I went to St. Mawes, and preached at noon. The word of God was like a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces! From thence I rode to Tregony, and preached in the street. Here likewise the gracious Spirit wrought upon many hearts. At the close of the year we had just a hundred more in the society in that Circuit, than was in it when we came; many of whom had found peace with God.

The next year I travelled in the west of Cornwall.

Here we saw but little fruit; but my soul was often like a watered garden. One Sabbath-day I went, with several others, from Plymouth-Dock to St. Germain's. An old Quaker gave me leave to speak before his door. The congregation was large, and in general very attentive. I believe the Lord spoke to many hearts. After preaching, the Quaker took us to his house, and gave me a little refreshment. After I received it, I sat some time in meditation, as my soul was in a happy frame; afterwards I fell on my knees, and poured out my soul in prayer. All who were present fell on their knees also. The power of God descended, so that scarcely any refrained from sighs, groans, and tears. From this I inferred, that Friends can feel as well as others, when the Lord touches the heart.

The year after I went to Wales; but, alas! the Antinomians had sown their tares so thick, that there was little or no room for the wheat to spring up.

The two following years I spent in the east of Cornwall, with much satisfaction. Before I came, a good work was begun at Plymouth-Dock, when Mr. Thomas Olivers was there. Before he came, the Antinomians seemed to carry all before them. Mr. Olivers preached several controversial sermons, in which he laid the axe at the root of Calvinism and Antinomianism. His arguments were powerful, and well supported by the word of God. Many now began to awake out of sleep; and these glorious beginnings were a means of adding near a hundred to that society. Before he came, they were a little more than thirty; and when I carried the account to our yearly Conference, they were a hundred and thirty.

While in this Round, I again visited St. Germain's; but met with a very rough reception. The mob gathered round the door, pelted me with rotten eggs; and after we shut the door, they cursed and swore, and broke the bottom part of it in pieces. God enabled me to possess my soul in patience; my mind was stayed on Him, and I was kept in perfect peace.

I likewise preached at Millbrook. Here also they pelted me with eggs; one of which would have taken me full in the mouth, but a young man that stood before me instantly put up his hand and caught it. Blessed be the Lord, He was on my side; and I had no fear what men or devils could do unto me.

When I came to Bodmin, the people told me two or three young men had several times disturbed the congregation. I told them, if they disturbed me, I would endeavour to make them quiet. In the evening one of them came, and began to make a noise. I desired him to be quiet; but he would not. I stopped in preaching, came from the pulpit, and put him out of the room. I had no sooner resumed my discourse, than he came in, and behaved more disorderly than before. I told the people I could not proceed, and desired they would take notice of it. Next day we got a warrant, and brought the offender before the mayor, who talked to him in a manner becoming his office. He told him he might as well go to church and make a noise there; that the law was on our side, &c. The young man trembled and cried, and offered to kneel and ask pardon; but I suffered him not. He paid the expense of the warrant and constable, and we had quietness all the time I was in that Circuit.

Since that I have met with many heavy trials from a quarter I least expected; but think it most pru-

dent to pass them over in silence. God knows them all, and the Judge of all the earth will do right.

On the 29th of last June I preached on Wood-Green, at the end of Witney, in Oxfordshire. While I was preaching, something uncommon impelled me to say, "My dear friends, take notice of what I am going to say. Before this day month, you will hear and see something very uncommon:" but I knew not why I said so. On Wednesday, the 2d of July, it began to thunder and lighten in a very dreadful manner. The people cried out that I had prophesied the world was to be at an end in a month; and they thought it was now fulfilling: two persons were struck dead by the lightning. Numbers had their sins set in order before them, saw the necessity of a Saviour, and some groaned after Him.

On the 10th the Lord thundered from heaven, and sent forth His lightnings, a second time. On the 11th it was more dreadful than it had been before. Now, indeed, the most stubborn heart trembled, and bowed before the Lord. The numbers that flocked both to the church and meeting were incredible; and there was such an awakening among them, as the oldest man living could not remember. In consequence thereof, the next time I came there I added fifty new members to our society.

Thus, sir, I have given you a short account of the mercy of God to my soul and body; and also of that little which I have done and suffered for His name's sake. Before I conclude, it may not be amiss to give some account of my sentiments. And,

1. I believe God made the first man holy, harmless, and undefiled; but being in honour, he continued not; he yielded to the tempter, and this

stripped him of the moral image of God. I believe, also, that all sinned and fell in him.

2. I believe all mankind were in Adam when God gave him the promise of a Saviour; and that consequently the promise was not only to him, but to his children.

3. I believe, with the Church of England, that Christ made, on the cross, a perfect and sufficient sacrifice, satisfaction, and oblation for all the sins of the whole world, whether original or actual. And that by virtue of this, all men may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth: that God rejects none but such as do despite to the Spirit of grace.

4. I believe, that, in order to be saved from the guilt and power of sin, men must repent, and believe in Christ.

5. I believe repentance to consist in a consciousness of sin, a godly sorrow for it, and a turning from it to God. I also believe faith to be the gift of God, but the act of man. God gives the power, and man uses it.

6. I believe, that in order to final salvation, our faith must be productive of good works; that without universal, personal holiness, no man shall see the Lord. This is so fully asserted in the word of God, that I am persuaded, all the craft of men, and all the rage of devils, cannot overthrow it.

7. I believe the crown of all spiritual blessings is the gift of eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

These, sir, are the doctrines I believe and teach; and at present I have no desire to change. I have had several offers from the world; but I love it not. I have had the offer of two or three Dissenting con-

gregations. They have my thanks for their intended kindness. But it is my desire to live and die a Methodist preacher. The height of my ambition is, to labour among my fathers and brethren, until we lie down together in the dust, and mount up into our Master's joy.

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your son in the Gospel,

RICHARD RODDA.

THE following account of Mr. Rodda's death was given in the Methodist Magazine for December, 1815 :—

DIED on Monday morning, October 30th, in London, Mr. Richard Rodda, aged seventy-two years. Many particulars highly interesting concerning this able and faithful minister of Christ occur in the account of him contained in the Arminian Magazine for 1784. He feared God from his youth, and was made at an early period of his life a happy witness of the blessed effects which the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit produce. He filled the office of an itinerant preacher among the Methodists, from the year 1770 till 1802; during which period he was highly respectable for piety, zeal, talents, and usefulness. When unable, through age and infirmities, to undergo the labours of an itinerant minister, he settled in the metropolis, where, to the utmost of his power, he laboured in the word and doctrine. On the Tuesday before his death he met his class; and on the Friday following attended the weekly meeting of the preachers at the City-Road

chapel. He had long been afflicted with a severe asthmatic complaint; but no apprehension was entertained of his speedy removal from earth to heaven, till he was on the verge of eternity.

Mr. Rance, the surgeon who attended Mr. Rodda, favoured us with the following account of the origin, progress, and fatal effects of his complaint:—

“The origin of his disease I should consider to have arisen from repeated exposure to damp and cold, probably from sleeping in damp beds. During the cold and damp season the fits of his disease were frequent; so that during the whole of the winter, for a few years past, he was confined to the house. On the return of the dry and warm weather he was able occasionally to engage in the work of the ministry. His constitution was naturally robust; and from his strength of body and muscular fibres, had he not laboured under a local affection of the chest, he might, humanly speaking, have lived many years.

“On Thursday, October 26th, and the following day, he felt some return of his difficulty of breathing. This he attributed to the cold and humid state of the atmosphere; and on Saturday evening the paroxysm increased in violence. On Sunday morning, finding that his difficulty of breathing had considerably increased, he sent a message to me, requesting my immediate attendance. I found him in a state of suffocation, occasioned by a violent fit of asthma. As symptoms indicative of inflammatory action were present, I took a portion of blood from him, and administered some medicine, from which he at first found some slight relief. But in a short time the fit resumed its violence, and the breathing became quick and more laborious. I now considered that all human efforts and medical skill would prove

unavailing ; and in this respect my expectations were painfully realized : for his respiration became quicker and shorter until two o'clock on Monday morning, when he expired.

“ From my knowledge of Mr. Rodda, I considered him a man of uprightness and independence of character, possessing great natural fortitude of mind, enjoying strong confidence in God, and always manifesting the greatest patience under affliction.”

Mr. Buckley, being sent for by Mrs. Rodda, about half-past nine o'clock on Sabbath-day morning, October 29th, found Mr. Rodda heavily afflicted with very great oppression upon his chest, and extreme difficulty of breathing. He was praying most fervently for a sanctified use of his affliction, for resignation to the will of his Father, and particularly for a renewed baptism of the Holy Spirit. His language was, “ Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Fill me with Thy precious love. Perfect the great work of holiness, and receive me to Thyself.” On seeing Mr. Buckley, he said, “ O, I am glad to see you. I suffer much ; but God is with me. It is now about fifty-eight years since the Lord set my soul at glorious liberty ; and I have found Him to be a gracious God all the way ; faithful to His promise. Not one word hath failed. Glory be to His name ! Come, pray ; but do not pray for my restoration, or for life. For why should I live when my work is done ? Let me enter into the joy of my Lord.” During prayer he was very fervent in spirit ; he appeared abundantly refreshed ; death was swallowed up in victory ; and his soul was on the wing for immortality. On taking an affectionate leave of his friend, he commended him to God ; and again he expressed his unshaken confidence, that he should, through the blood of his

gracious Redeemer, enjoy, and for ever enjoy, the purchased and heavenly inheritance; and said, "All is well. The Lord bless you."

From Mr. James Mackie, of Banner-street, we received the following account of our late departed friend and brother:—

"On Sunday afternoon, when I entered the room, he said, 'Do not pray for my stay. I long to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better. Lord Jesus, give me patience.' In expressing his love for the Lord Jesus, he said, 'I could go to Smithfield, and die for His dear cause. I know I could.' Some little time after, he prayed most fervently for the spread of the Gospel; that the Lord would own the labours of His ministers; and especially that the young preachers might declare the word with zeal and faithfulness; that they might be kept humble; and that their doctrine might be pure. He frequently prayed, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'"

Thus died another of our old, pious, and faithful preachers, after having long borne the burden and heat of the day. His life of piety, zeal, and usefulness was crowned with a triumphant end.

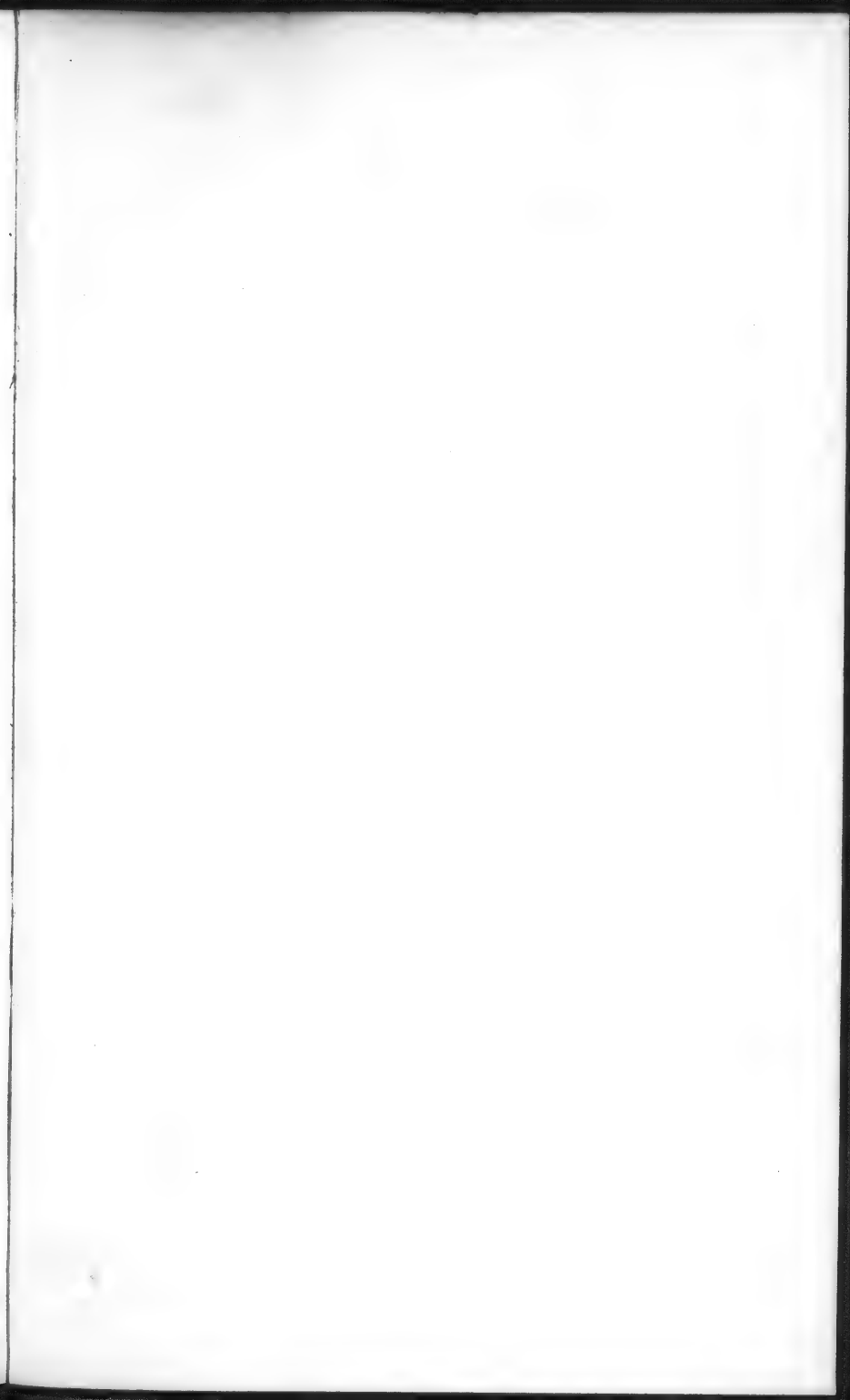
THE following character of Mr. Rodda was given by the Wesleyan Conference of 1816:—

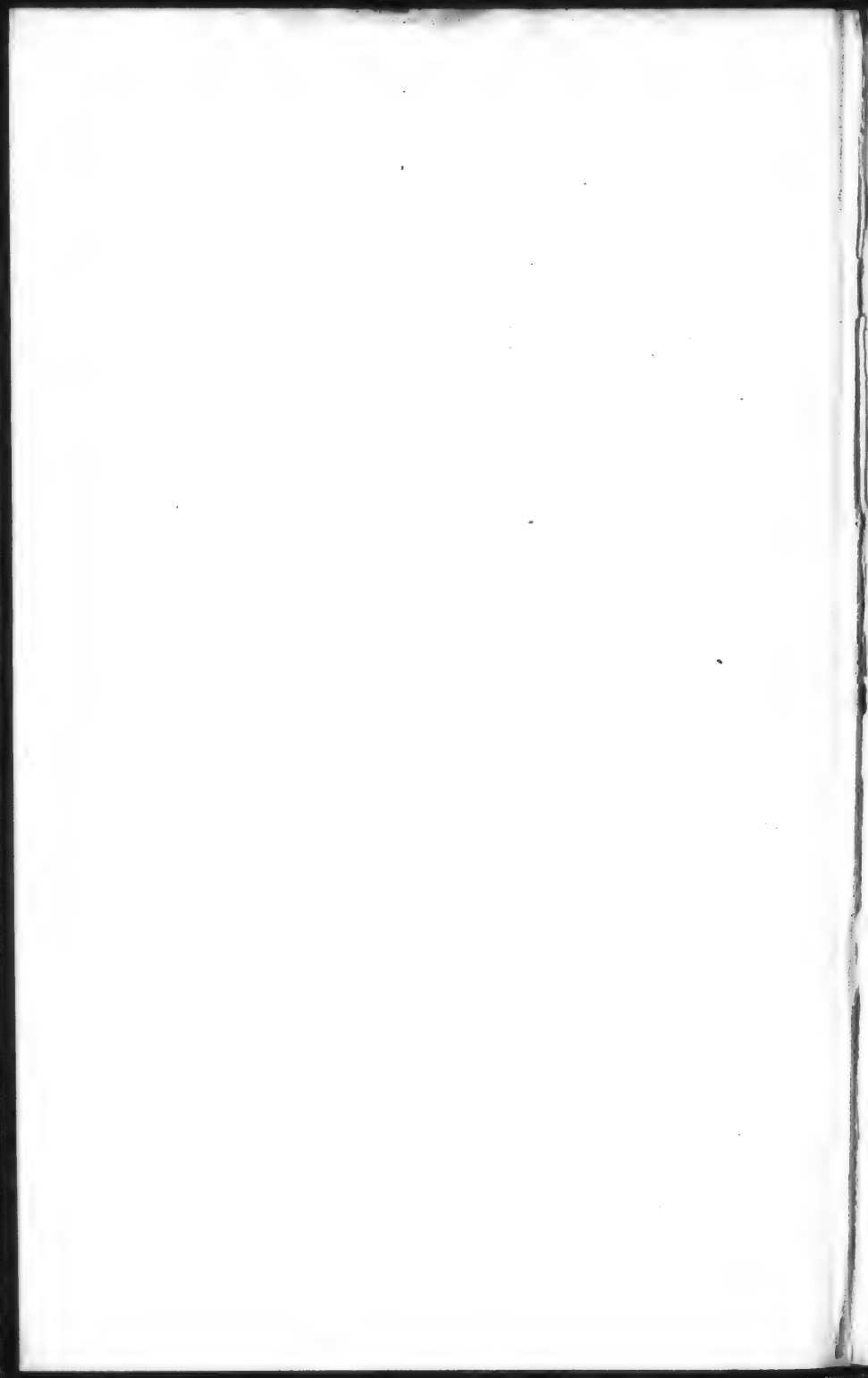
RICHARD RODDA; a man of sound judgment, of strict morals, of considerable talents, and abundant in the work of the ministry. He sought the Lord when about thirteen years of age, followed Him fully, and was rendered a blessing to many souls; not only in his public labours as a preacher of the Gospel,

but by his judicious counsels, his Christian sympathy, and tender concern for those societies he was called to watch over. Thirty-three years he endured the toils of an itinerant life ; and when he could no longer bear them, he laboured in London, in proportion to his strength, from 1802, till his death, October 30th, 1815. His prayer in his last illness, that the struggle might be short, was graciously answered ; and, what was of infinitely greater value, he had great peace and joy in the God of his salvation.

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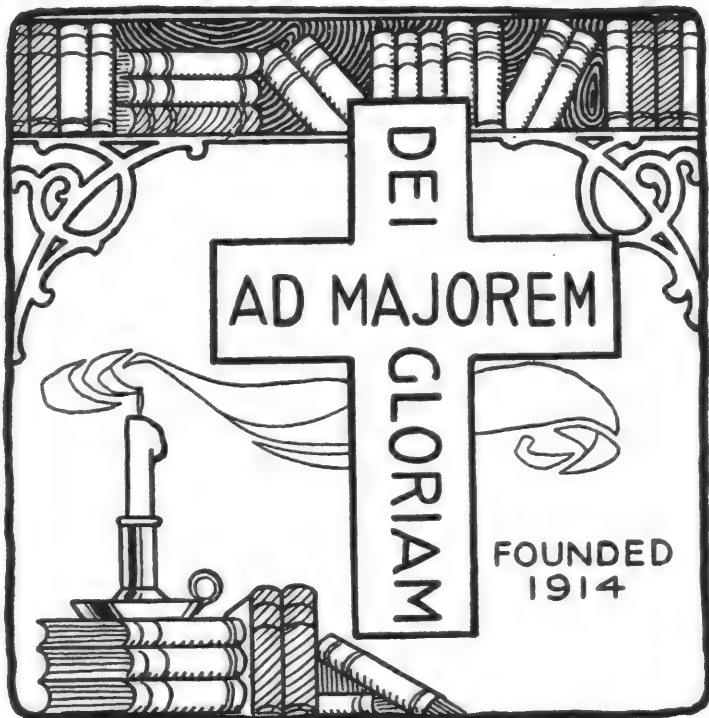
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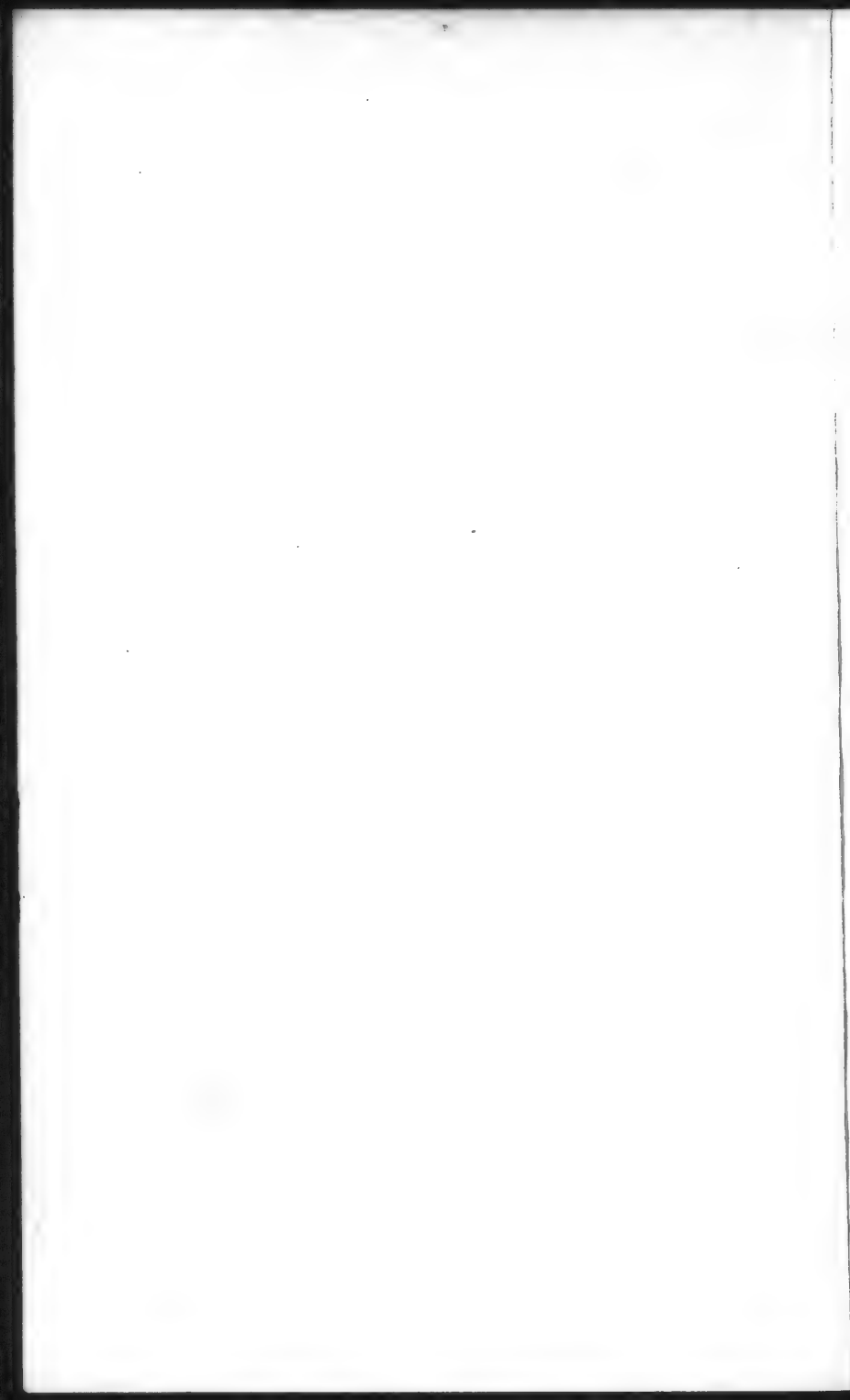
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THE LIVES

OF

EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,
IN SIX VOLUMES.

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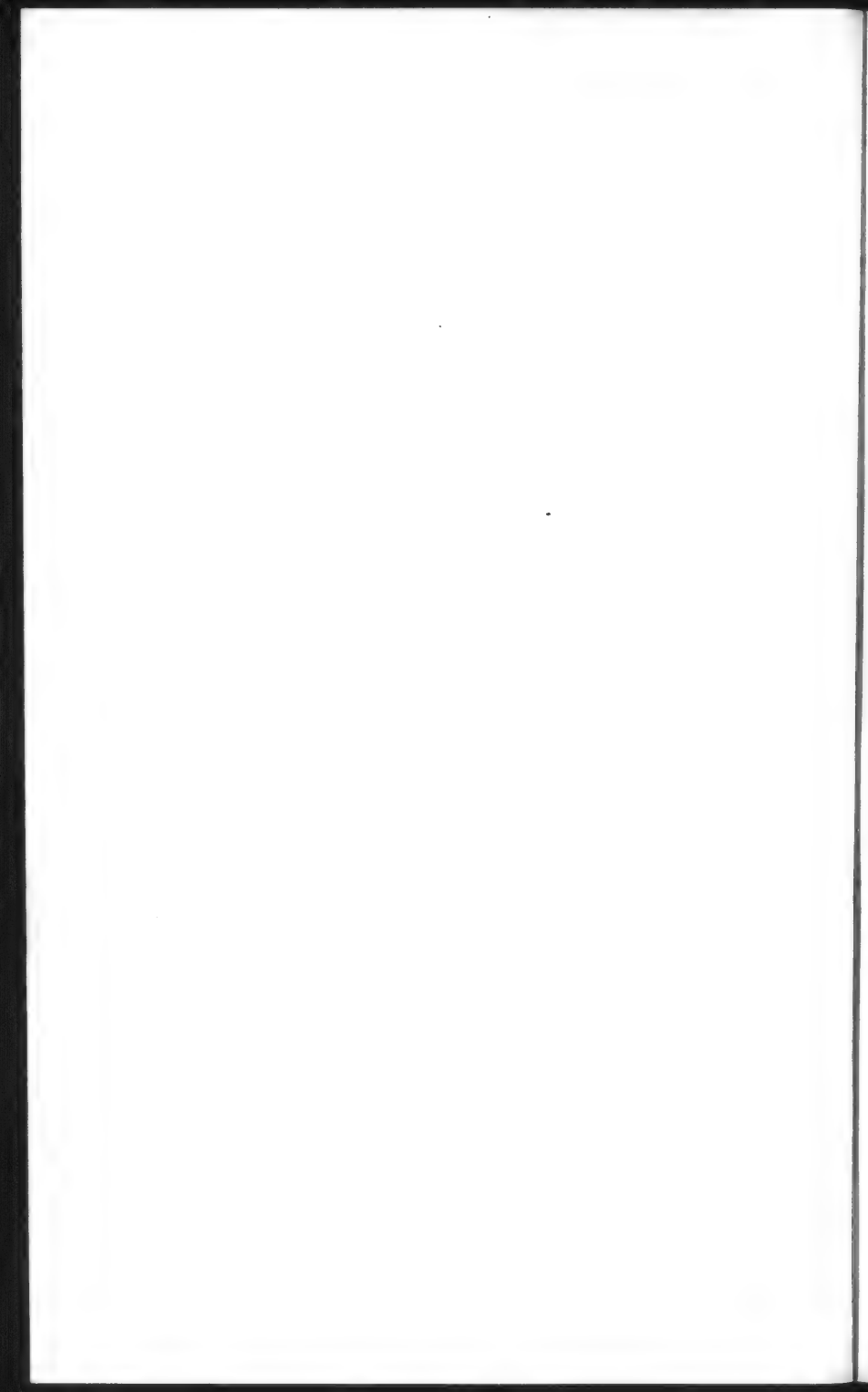
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THE
LIFE AND DEATH
OF
MR. THOMAS WALSH:

COMPOSED IN GREAT PART
FROM THE ACCOUNTS LEFT BY HIMSELF.

BY JAMES MORGAN,
A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."—Psalm cxii. 6.

"Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."—Heb. xiii. 7.

"Heaven waits not the last moment, owns her friends
On this side death; and points them out to men:
A lecture silent, but of sovereign power!
To vice confusion, and to virtue peace."

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

I HAVE carefully read the following account,
and believe it to be strictly true. I think it will
need no other recommendation to the children
of God.

JOHN WESLEY.

January 20th, 1763.

PREFACE.

I. WE often give thanks to God, for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear; and pray for grace, so to follow their good example, that with them we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom. It has been an ancient practice in the Christian church, to represent to the imitation of the living, the lives of deceased servants of Christ, who, though dead, speak in our hearts, in the remembrance of their pious example.

For some ages, most instances of this sort were transmitted to mankind chiefly by monks of the Church of Rome. But their great partiality, and a spirit of emulation which arose among their different orders, in favour of their founders, and members in general, together with their extreme passion for the marvellous in almost everything, render most of their accounts rather romance, than simple narrations of real facts.

And they are of little solid use. For their numerous accounts of revelations, ecstasies, visions, trances, miracles, and celestial apparitions, rather surprise us, and create scruples, than lead us into true holiness of living. "Our Saviour Himself," as a great man observes, "chose to have fewer instances of wonder in His life, that He might transmit the more of an imitable example." Whereas accounts

of this kind are no more imitable than they are entertaining: and there is truth in what Mr. Addison observes, that "there is as much pleasure in hearing a man tell his dreams, as in reading relations of this nature."

Had he who is the subject of the following account continued a member of that communion, and been as unweariedly laborious and successful in promoting the interests of Rome, as he was in promoting those of Jesus Christ, he might probably have stood fair for canonization, and would undoubtedly have increased the number of these marvellous relations.

But be the extravagance of some, and the credulity of others on this head, as they may, they do not make void real facts; nor should they discourage the useful custom of presenting mankind with true characters of the excellent of the earth. There is such a thing as being acquainted with God, and being happy in Him. There are, who know the true God, and His Son Jesus Christ; and who live as becomes persons professing godliness, walking before God in all holiness.

Such an one, it can be truly said, was Thomas Walsh. He led a "life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion: such a life, without which the purity of human society cannot be preserved, and by which, as our irregularities are made regular, so our miseries are not made a mockery. And we find so much reason to address ourselves to an imitation of so excellent a pattern, as justly chides every degree and minute of neglect."

II. "There are many who talk well," said an eminently pious man; "but let us live well." It is

indeed but a poor character of a person, that he has said a great many good things; supposing there be not a conversation answerable thereto. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," saith Jesus; "but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven." Then only are we the true servants of Christ, when we do whatsoever He has commanded us.

The present is professedly a time of much religious knowledge; the Gospel is fully preached, and, perhaps, more frequently than it has been since the Reformation. Yet still it must be complained, that among the numbers who love to hear it, but few, comparatively, love to practise it: too many hold the truth in unrighteousness, professing to know God, while in works they deny Him. There are others, who, though free from outward sin, and who even observe religious duties, yet make little or no progress as to inward holiness. The good effects of the grace of God are prevented in many, through mere inattention of spirit, irrecollection, and indolence. We do not sufficiently lay things to heart. We do not live enough at home. We are too superficially acquainted with ourselves, to get deeply into fellowship with God. And for these causes, not to speak of more gross ones, how many are there weak and sickly among us?

It is with a view principally to promote this inward religion, that the following narrative of a person, not slightly acquainted therewith, is presented to the world, but most particularly to such as are truly serious. How far it is calculated to contribute thereto, those who are pleased to read it must judge. This much, however, is certain, that some

pains have been taken to render it subservient to so desirable an end.

III. It consists of three Parts. The first contains the most remarkable particulars concerning him, from his infancy to the twentieth year of his age; such as his education; forsaking the Church of Rome; inward conversion to God; and his providential appointment to labour for the salvation of his neighbour.

The second Part contains a variety of incidents relative to his public employments; his great labours; endeavours to convert members of the Church of Rome; the attempts of the Romish clergy to hinder him; his application to study; improvement in Divine knowledge; frequent sickness; various temptations; and his improvement by them.

The third Part represents his more internal state, with respect to his daily course of walking with God; his attainments in the Divine life; together with his last sickness and death.

My part of the work consisted much in methodizing, abridging, and connecting accounts which he left of himself. The substance of the first Part he wrote principally in Dublin, a few years before his death. Many of the materials of the second, and more of the third Part, I have collected from some thousand pages of his journals; so that the division into chapters, the reducing things distant in the order of time, to the same head, and keeping up the thread of the narrative through the whole, were the chief objects of my attention.

I have likewise taken the liberty to enlarge a thought, and add an observation or improvement, as

occasion presented; if haply I might contribute in any degree towards the direction or encouragement of the children of God. In doing this I have interspersed throughout the whole several verses, which occurred while I wrote; some of which were admitted because they express my sentiments more fully than I could myself; others, because of the deep importance of the sentiments they contain, and therefore the probability of their being useful, at least to some persons, in whatever connexion they are found; though in every such insertion there appeared a pertinency to the subject in hand.

I shall not take up the reader's time with giving the reasons which prevailed with me to undertake this work; nor attempt to shelter myself from censure or contempt for its defects, under the commonplace subterfuges, and self-bestowed compliments and apologies, well-known on such occasions. My own conscience acquits me from vanity or self-sufficiency in reference thereto. The long intimacy which I had with him gave sufficient ground to the repeated and importunate requests of several, who knew his manner of life, to engage me in furnishing them with some memorials thereof; and, although I had done something of this kind for my own, and the private use of a few friends, yet it was not till his own papers fell into my hands, that I could prevail with myself to make it public. But among the several motives that were urged, what finally determined was,

"Love to the living, duty to the dead:

————— it seem'd profane

To quench a glory lighted at the skies,

And cast in shadows his illustrious race."

Considered in one light, he was not, it is true, of that importance, that memorials of him should be transmitted to mankind. There wanted in him those qualifications of illustrious birth, titles, honours, and dignities, which make it somewhat honourable to patronize persons so qualified, and which alone beget the esteem of the generality of people. But to such as form their estimate of persons and things, not according to the maxims of this world, but according to truth, and in reference to eternity; who judge of men by the heart, as being firmly persuaded that "solid glory, which cannot be imitated by pride, nor equalled by pomp, resides in the source of personal qualifications and heavenly sentiments:" to such there will need no apology for presenting them with a character which has for its recommendation only that of being honoured and approved of God. In which light

"Titles and honours are laid aside to find man's dignity."

IV. Next to the holy Scriptures, perhaps there are no writings so calculated to answer all the purposes of holy living, as the lives of eminent servants of God, who followed hard and closely after "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." They speak a powerful, though silent, language to the attentive heart, "Go thou, and do in like manner." They are a full answer to the delusive flatteries of self-love; and to the children of disobedience who assert that it is impossible to live in such a manner. To live as angels, or disembodied spirits, is indeed above the state of humanity. And

"'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man."

But are we not the purchase of the blood of Christ? Are we not the objects of His continual love? And has He not promised, and sent His Holy Spirit to prepare, and make us "habitations for God?" What, then, may we not expect from such infinite love, from such infinite power?

"No man too largely from Heaven's love can hope,
If what is hoped he labour to secure."

And it is matter of joy to the servants of God, that whenever it is asked, "Where are the witnesses of these things; of that religion whereof ye speak?" they have it in their power to say, both of the living and the dead, "Come and see."

In the conduct of persons truly devoted to God, we often meet with particular ways of behaviour,—maxims of Christian prudence, or secrets relating to a holy life,—which, when adopted into our own conduct, often serve in the room of many rules, and are singular incentives to our diligence and fervour. And the force which example has above precept is well known.

"The experience of others," says this servant of God,* "has been very refreshing to my soul; and has often stirred up my spirit to seek after God most earnestly." Indeed, he esteemed, as an invaluable jewel, everything of this kind which he met with. He had a collection of "Lives," which he generally took with him wherever he went; esteeming them, because of their usefulness to his soul, next to the holy Scriptures. He was seldom a day without reading something of the lives of the children of God.

* His words are all along enclosed with commas.

“These examples,” says St. Austin, “excite, and, as it were, joy the heart, lest it should fall asleep in a sort of despair, looking on as impossible what it has not experienced yet.” The same father (speaking of himself elsewhere) says, “The examples of the holy servants of God were like hot coals cast into the bosom of his soul, heating, and warming, and setting him all of a flame.”

O Jesus, let me and my readers die the death of the righteous, and let our last end be like his !

CANTERBURY, *July*, 1762.

THE
LIFE AND DEATH
OF
MR. THOMAS WALSH.

INTRODUCTION.

THE exceeding riches of the grace of God our Saviour, and the effectual working of His mighty power, have, in all ages, shone most conspicuously in the holy lives and exemplary conversation of His eminent servants,—“the excellent of the earth,” with whom are His peculiar delights.

And although, strictly speaking, He only is wise and good, nevertheless there is a sense in which goodness is with propriety ascribed both to angels and to men. This consists in their resemblance to Him who is the source and model of all goodness, holiness, and perfection : as proceeding from His fulness, whence life and blessedness flow to every creature, whether in heaven or in earth.

Of this kind the Scriptures furnish us with several examples : Abraham, Enoch, Noah, Daniel, and Job, beside many others, are described in the Old Testament as men walking before God, and perfect in their generation. And the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews contains little else than an account of ancient worthies, eminently remarkable for their faith, suffer-

ings, patience, and glorious end; who, considering themselves as strangers and pilgrims in this world, sought "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God." "And God," saith the apostle, "hath provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The time would fail to mention particularly the names of all the eminently faithful who have lived, and adorned their profession, since life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. They are an innumerable company. It is enough for us to know, that if any one loveth God, the same is known of Him. Their "names are written in the Lamb's book of life," and shall at last be numbered amongst His jewels,

"When names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Thou, O Christ, art all in all."

Among the number of persons eminent for their spiritual usefulness and personal holiness, which the present generation has produced, he, a part of whose life is here related, may justly be considered as one; and his example is one which, in some respects, may be said to have its peculiar excellences.

A circumstantial detail of such things as often find a place in this kind of writings—namely, family, childhood, education, stature, complexion, and a variety of common occurrences—is judged as well tedious as foreign to the design of the work,* which

* "This is true glory and renown, when God,
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all His angels; who, with true applause,
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PARADISE REGAINED.

is to represent principally what passed between God and his soul, in the progress of his conversation and daily walking with God.

And yet neither is intelligence of this sort wholly omitted : he has left a few particulars relative thereto, which will enable the reader to form some idea, as well of the former as latter part of his pilgrimage.

But the descent and character of this servant of God, chiefly regarded in this account, are those which were derived to him as a son of faithful Abraham, one of those faithful of whom he is styled "the father ;" yea, as an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ, of all the blessings purchased with His most precious blood. And now,

" By ministerial spirits convey'd,
Lodged in the garner of the sky,
He rests, in Abraham's bosom laid ;
He lives with God, no more to die."

Privileges these, which are common to all, (Jude 3,) and in respect of which there is no difference between the prince and the beggar, the Jew and the Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free : all may know, love, and be happy in the One God and Father of all, through the crucified Jesus, who, "by the grace of God, hath tasted death for every man."

His prayer was, "that this little book" (meaning what is here called the First Part, great part of which he wrote himself) "may be made a blessing to all who shall read it; that the Lord Jesus may make it a means of kindling holy desire in their souls, and of stirring them up to the praise and love of God."

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PART I.

CHAPTER I.

Of his Birth and Education.

THOMAS WALSH was born in the year of our Lord 1730, at a place called Ballylinn, in the county, and within about ten miles of the city, of Limerick, in Ireland. His father, Edmond Walsh, was by occupation a carpenter ; a man of tolerable education, and strong natural understanding. His mother's name was Helena Nougham, born of reputable parents. They were both members of, and entirely bigoted to, the Church of Rome.

When about eight years old, he was put to school to learn English : his mother-tongue was Irish. Afterwards he went to school to one of his brothers, of whom he had several, by whom he was initiated into the Latin tongue. Having acquired its rudiments in some tolerable degree, he went afterwards into the neighbouring county of Clare, with a design to be put apprentice, his friends intending him to be of his father's trade.

But God, in His adorable providence and unsearchable wisdom, had, as the event showed, other designs concerning him. Disappointed, therefore, in this, he returned to school, and proceeded in his pursuit of learning ; applying himself at present to the study of Latin, which he had but lately intermitted.

After he had made some considerable progress in this, he applied himself to the study of some parts of the mathematics, for which he thought he had a better genius than for languages. He soon acquired the knowledge of arithmetic, both vulgar and decimal, measuring superficies and solids, &c. ; and afterwards went to the city of Limerick, in order to perfect himself in writing.

And now, having continued at school till about the nineteenth year of his age, and having acquired such branches of literature as fitted him for being useful to others in the same way, he quitted school, and set up one for himself; wanting neither scholars, nor ability to instruct them, which he did with success, during the time he continued his school.

CHAPTER II.

Of his Religion, and the Struggle which he found between Nature and Grace, till the Sixteenth Year of his Age.

HIS parents, being, as has been observed, members of, and strongly attached to, the Church of Rome, brought him up in the same principles and communion, and took care that his mind should be early furnished with the first and fundamental part of what they judged his duty towards God.

"When," says he, "I was young, I learned the Lord's prayer, and Ave Maria, in Irish, together with the hundred and thirtieth Psalm in Latin, with the Popish augmentation thereto. And now I began to imbibe that uncharitable, antisciptural opinion, that all dissenters from the Church of Rome

were heretics, and in a state of damnation. But now, since the Lord hath enlightened my understanding, I am fully convinced that therein I greatly erred, 'not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God.'

"I cannot but lament the case of those parents who, alas ! not knowing what they do, endeavour to instil into the minds of their children such pernicious principles ; and I do earnestly entreat all children, as soon as they come to years of discretion, and are capable thereof, to examine, and judge for themselves."

It pleased our gracious Lord to work in his heart very early, striving by the operations of the Holy Spirit to subject him to Himself. He made him to bear the yoke in his youth, and by His terrors restrained him from excess and the great offence. "Even while I was young and ignorant," says he, "God was striving with me, and often terrified my heart ; especially when I thought of the day of judgment, and of eternity.

"At those times especially I frequently repeated the prayers I had learned. But, alas ! to how little purpose, while I prayed neither with the Spirit, nor with understanding ! My heart was hard and stubborn, and my understanding was blind and foolish. I had no just conception either of God or of religion. Nay, so great was my ignorance, that when I named our Saviour in Irish, I thought the name belonged to some woman in heaven.

"While I was thus foolish and blind, 'even as a beast before Thee,' my fallen nature began powerfully to discover itself. The seed of the serpent, working in my heart, broke forth in words and in deeds. Now pride, anger, and self-will, especially,

reigned over me. But, alas! I then little knew that those accursed tempers proceeded from that source of universal disorder, and all human miseries, original sin.* I believed that this had brought temporal death into the world, and great disorder into the whole state of outward nature, the visible creation; but of its subjecting the soul to spiritual, and exposing it to eternal, death, I had no apprehension. I had, it is true, conviction whenever I did amiss, told a lie, or fell into any other outward sin; (which I could account for from education, and natural conscience;) but the Spirit of God and the holy Scriptures alone, I now plainly see, could convince me that my tempers deserved the damnation of hell. And hitherto I was ignorant of both.

“When I was about eight years old, I began to love play, and divers other youthful and silly pleasures, spending the time I was out of school in catching birds, playing at ball, and the like. My fondness for these occasioned my frequently breaking the Sabbath, which I usually spent either in these vain amusements, or in reading some profane history, or other unprofitable book: and indeed no one so much as told me that these kinds of employment were any violation of the Lord’s day; my parents, like the rest of their neighbours, esteeming them innocent diversions, harmless amusements.

* St. Austin, Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, who lived in the fourth century, is said first to have given this name to what the Scripture calls the “old man, which is corrupt;” the “sin which dwelleth in us;” the “carnal mind, which is enmity against God;”—and our Reformers, “the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.”

“I did not then know that I ought not, on this day, to ‘do mine own pleasure, to speak mine own words,’ or think my own thoughts; that I ought to spend it wholly in glorifying God, by praying to Him, hearing His word, and reading and meditating therein; ‘calling the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable.’ (Isai. lviii. 13.) O the curse of ignorance and evil example! How many souls do they lead into the broad way of destruction! How happy would it have been for my poor soul, if I had known and ‘remembered my Creator in the days of my youth!’ Had I been ‘brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;’ had I ‘known the Scriptures from my childhood;’ (Eccles. xii. 1; Eph. vi. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 15;) how would it have contributed to prevent my wrong conceptions, and to regulate, at least in some measure, my whole conduct!

“From the tenth to the fourteenth year of my age my corruptions increased, took deeper root, and more visibly appeared in my whole conversation; and yet I was more regular and conscientious in discharging my duty towards God. (So I was taught to call a dull form of words, part of which only were addressed to God, and the greatest part to saints and angels.) My parents, according to custom, brought me at the usual times to the priest,* who examined me concerning the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, and *Credo in Deum*, with some other rites of the Church of Rome. But, alas! to how little purpose! It made me neither wiser nor better. Some part, it is true, of what he taught me was according to the word of God; but the greater part entirely

* So the Romish clergy in general are called in Ireland, and so distinguished from those of the Established Church.

repugnant thereto, and to all truth and righteousness. But I knew not then how to distinguish between the truths of God and the traditions of men; having had no knowledge of 'the law and the testimony,' the only infallible touchstone of doctrine and practice. He might, therefore, have imposed whatever he pleased upon me; and the rather, as I was taught to believe whatever he said, and to consider it as coming from the mouth of God. Indeed, I could not help observing, even then, that several of those reverend gentlemen frequently erred in practice:* though still I thought they were infallible as to doctrine.

"After this catechising, I became more inquisitive, and began to read books of devotion. These, I found, for the present, had their use. Whenever I read of the passion of our Saviour, the love of God to sinners, the joys of heaven, or the miseries of the damned, my heart became deeply affected; and much desire towards God enkindled in my soul." But, alas! it soon died away again, becoming like "the morning cloud, or the early dew." The inconstancy and corruption of his heart, easily prevailing over those Divine but transient impressions, left him to his former hardness and formality.

"From the fourteenth to the sixteenth year of my age, I had more of the form, though less of the power, of godliness, than even before. I now attended the public worship, (that is, went to mass,) and every night repeated my prayers, which were, indeed, no better than vain repetitions. But still, pride, anger, self-will, and revenge more powerfully prevailed over me than ever; and I added to these,

* The lives of many of the Romish clergy in Ireland are lamentably scandalous.

my former prevailing abominations, lies and evil words. Indeed, I had an entire aversion to cursing and swearing, in the gross sense; but abounded in petty oaths, (so called,) and bad wishes. Of this sort there are legions in the Irish language:" perhaps more, and more wickedly expressive, than in any other language in the known world. "Being at play, I remember, one day, and provoked by one of my play-fellows, I swore (horror to think!) by the great and glorious name of Jehovah! (to the best of my remembrance, I never did so before, nor ever since :) in that instant, I felt I had grievously sinned against God, and deserved His wrath and heavy displeasure.

"To the rest of my evils I joined disobedience to my parents. Indeed, I dared not show it outwardly, to my father especially, whom I so dreaded, as often to tremble for fear of him. But my heart was hard and stubborn." One instance of this he mentions, which wrought him many a bitter reflection afterwards: for years he hardly ever thought of it without being deeply affected with shame and sorrow. Having one day, through his stubbornness, greatly provoked his mother, and given her a wicked and impertinent answer, she said to him, "You have grieved me." "It went like an arrow through my heart. I knew the fifth commandment (the fourth, indeed, I then called it, according to the custom of the Church of Rome *) strictly forbids disobedience

* The second commandment, which forbids the worship of images, it has seemed good to that "Mistress of all Churches" (so she styles herself: compare with the Holy Ghost's description, "The mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth," Rev. xvii. 5) to leave out of the Decalogue; because, no doubt, of its interfering with their too-idolatrous regard to images. But, in order to keep up the number ten, they divide the last into two commandments. This is what he refers to.

to parents, and that to honour them is 'the first commandment with promise.' (Eph. vi. 2.) Justly, therefore, was I condemned. But, O God, how little is it to be wondered at that I did not rightly love, neither was obedient to, my earthly parents, while I knew neither love nor obedience towards Thee, my Father, who art in heaven! Well do I know now, and praised be Thy love for this knowledge, that such as are froward towards Thee will, while they remain so, never be truly a comfort to their parents." They may, indeed, pay an outward compliance, and a seemingly dutiful subjection, as is often seen even among professed worldlings; but cordially and disinterestedly to love, honour, and reverence our parents can only be the effect of subjection in heart and life to the "Father of spirits." So universally true it is, that "a foe to God was ne'er true friend to man."

"This duty to parents is the very firmament and band even of commonwealths. He that honours his parents will also love his brethren, derived from the same loins; he will dearly account of all his relatives, and persons of the same cognation: and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. Then we honour our parents, if, with great readiness, we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sickness, and supply their wants; and, as much as in us lies, give them support who gave us being."

CHAPTER III.

Giving a farther Account of him ; the Corruptions he struggled against, and the Means he made use of to subdue them, from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Year of his Age.

Now both his sins and convictions daily increased upon him. The desire of the flesh, in particular, raged in his nature ; and it wanted not its frequent and prevalent incitements. Now likewise he began to assume the man, and kept more company than before ; which not a little inflamed his besetting sin. Temptations from without were multiplied, and there wanted not opportunities and solicitations from the devil and nature to defile himself before the Lord. But still the preventing grace of God restrained him, Abimelech-like, from sinning against Him in the actual transgression. This, indeed, though it did not, could not, exempt him from guilt, fear, and shame, considering the purity of the Gospel law, nevertheless became justly matter of his thanksgiving to God. "I do," says he, "praise God unfeignedly for withholding me from my own actual wickedness, and preventing my leading others into the cursed and detestable abomination. But I abhor and condemn myself for the concupiscence and wickedness of my heart, which (with grief and horror God knoweth I speak it !) discovered itself in other respects, such as it is a shame even to mention. Of this no human eye could be a witness." But God, (O Thou Fountain of immaculate purity !) His holy angels, and his own conscience, were more than ten thousand witnesses against him.

And now, at length, his life became a burden to him, almost insupportable. His true character at this time was, "O wretched man that I am!" how, "who shall deliver me?" He felt indwelling sin, indwelling hell, and breathed in many a groan,—

"O, what is life without my God?
A burden more than I can bear:
I struggle to throw off my load;
Me from myself I strive to tear!"

"The Spirit of God," says he, "deeply wounded me. 'The arrows of the Almighty' stuck fast in me, and my very bones trembled because of my sin. I was persuaded in my heart that this commotion was conviction of my sin; but had little conception that the Holy Spirit was the chief agent in the work: for, alas! so great was my ignorance, that I did not know there was any Holy Ghost for me to receive.

"While I was thus in the midst of my extremity, I confessed to the priest, according to the custom of the Church of Rome. He advised me to say many prayers; (as he termed counting my beads;) but, alas! this did not do: and indeed how should it? I was brought into captivity through the power of 'sin which reigned in my members.' And even my multiplied prayers could be little else than an abomination to the Lord, while neither the form nor the matter of them was according to the will of God; many of them being little else than vain repetitions, and empty babblings to physicians of no value in this respect, which, therefore, left me under the power of 'sin and death.'"

Indeed, how else should it be? while He was yet unthought of, at least unapplied to, who alone could

help him; even Jesus, whose name is Salvation: and beside which, in heaven or in earth, there is none other by which a sinner can be saved. He it is that invites, and He only can, and doth, give the weary and the heavy laden to find rest to their souls, and who, at length, did "allay his fever of desire, by sprinkling him with blood."

Hearing the priest preach one Lord's day, and declaim vehemently against a variety of gross sins, the discourse, though (as his words are) "mixed with many falsities," so deeply affected him, that in the anguish of his spirit he resolved never more to return to house or home, till God should show him mercy.* This precipitate and unadvised resolution was, however, of short continuance. In fact, the commotion and disordered state of his soul ill admitted of anything uniformly steady, whether right or wrong, either in purpose or in practice: it therefore soon vanished away, and he again sought,

* One may observe here, that when the Spirit of God effectually convinceth of sin, the distinction between a great and a little sinner has, with regard to the person's self, no existence. He had been guilty of nothing so notoriously bad as to occasion all this trouble; nor had he then any knowledge of those persons who are said to trouble people with unnecessary scruples about their salvation. No; but his fig-leaves were cast aside. The fountain of his fallen and corrupt nature was discovered. He was not "born again!" Conscience therefore of this, he could not but be unhappy for the present. True it is in such a case, that

"Sorrow, and wretchedness, and pain
Are all that here on earth we see;
Restless we pant for ease in vain,
In vain,—till ease we find in Thee!
Nor is there in this low creation
What can man's wretchedness remove;
All is misery and vexation,
Anguish all, but Jesu's love."

by various ways, to procure some alleviation of his distress.

“I strove,” says he, “to divert myself in the best manner I could, seeking rest and peace in the miserable comforts of this world. But my conscience was still restless, and a hell opened in my breast. Not knowing what to do, nor which way to turn for rest, I at length attempted to quiet the clamours of my troubled mind by solemnly resolving how soberly, righteously, and godly I would live the residue of my life. Full of these good purposes, and strengthened as I thought by vows and promises, I hoped all would be well; having all this while no idea of the satisfaction by Christ, and the all-sufficiency of His merits: and therefore, resolving only in my own strength, my resolutions proved as broken cisterns, which could hold no comfort; and as broken reeds, which afforded no strength!”

Struggling on still in the dark, he added fastings to his prayers and resolutions.* But all this did not

* It is by no means intended to insinuate, as though these were light and insignificant things. Far from it. They are, in their proper place, and rightly used, acceptable to God, and profitable to men. And whoever designs to know the Lord should go and do in like manner. They are “fruits meet for repentance.” But the mistake is, the putting these, and the means of grace in general, in the place of that *blood*, and those *stripes*, by which alone a sinner can be healed; a making anything matter of the soul’s dependence, save Jesus, and Him crucified.

“Fruitless, till He Himself impart,
Must all our efforts prove:
They cannot change a sinful heart,
They cannot purchase love.
I trust in Him who stands between
The Father’s wrath and me:
Jesu, thou great eternal Mean,
I look for all from Thee!”

do. He still felt himself bound as in "affliction and iron." He remained in sore bondage, doing the evil he would not, and not doing the good which he would have done. (Rom. vii. 19.) His convictions became still sharper, and his fear of hell more deeply distressing. Endeavouring, therefore, by some means or other to procure rest for his soul, he had recourse to his former shifts, and says, "I repeated my resolutions and vows against sin; but especially whenever I fell into any outward wickedness; and, above all, the sin that did so easily beset me. Then I was on the rack, and I, through extremity of anguish, have frequently struck myself against the ground, tearing the hairs from off my head."

His light began now to increase with his painful feelings. "About this time," says he, "by reading, and the help of the Holy Spirit, I began to have still clearer notions concerning the nature and consequences of sin, and particularly of those which, by the Church of Rome, are termed *mortal* sins." *

This increase of knowledge did not, however, mend, much less heal, his heart. No:—

"The sudden ray of heavenly light
Which dimly dawn'd upon his night,
But made his darkness visible,
And left him to a deeper hell."

* The distinction between *mortal* and *venial* sins, so famous amongst the Romanists, may on this occasion be observed to be vain. For although there can be no doubt but some sins are of a more heinous nature, and incur more aggravated guilt, than others, yet all sin is properly mortal, that is, renders the committers of it liable to eternal death, according to the words of the Holy Ghost by the prophet, "The soul that sinneth"—sinneth, without restriction or distinction, that lives in any violation of that "law, the transgression" of which "is sin"—"shall die." And an apostle, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all."

And even in this respect he found it true, that "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow;" a proposition which is universally true with respect to all the pursuits of the soul after happiness: the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, alone excepted. Struggling therefore in his chains, he resolved upon other measures; and finding that his prayers, tears, resolutions, and vows did not avail, he devised another expedient, and came to this determination, solemnly to swear to the Lord, imagining that then it would not be possible that he should break with Him afterwards, as had been the case with all his former efforts.

Accordingly he bound himself with an oath, that for the time to come he would abstain from, and utterly renounce, all those sins he then accused himself of, and which had hitherto wrought him so much uneasiness. This procedure begot in him, for the present, rather some cessation from torment, than procured his true peace, and left him for a while in deep security. But, alas! it was not long ere he found this band, likewise, was altogether weak, even as the staff of a broken reed; nor better than tow before the flame. He fell into one of those very sins against the commission of which he had so sacredly bound himself; involving by this means his enlightened conscience in the additional guilt of what he called perjury, and thus rendered his anxiety and embarrassment great beyond description.

Who can conceive what his weary spirit now experienced! His wretchedness and confusion exceeded all the power of words to express:—

"Desp'rate soul, what must I do!
Damn'd I am while here I breathe:
Who shall now deliver? who
Can redeem me from this death?"

“Plague and curse I now inherit,
Fears, and wars, and storms, within;
Pain, and agony of spirit,
Sin chastising me for sin.

“Weeping, woe, and lamentation,
Vain desire, and fruitless prayer;
Guilt, and shame, and condemnation,
Doubt, distraction, and despair!”

Yea, he gave up all hope; and, in short, became well nigh desperate. He knew not whither to betake himself, or what should be his next step; reasoning thus with himself in the bitterness of his soul:—
“Since I have perjured myself in one instance, I may as well commit all my old sins over again,” &c.
“Thus,” adds he, “I was driven by the devil, allured by sin and corruption, and deceived by my own evil heart.”

About this time, likewise, it pleased the Lord to visit him with a fit of illness, in and by which his fears and misery were considerably increased. He often bewailed himself in the uttermost anguish of spirit, with weeping and lamentation, breathing out his soul in moans. “O the guilt of sin! When charged home upon the conscience by the Spirit of God, what an intolerable load! ‘A wounded spirit who can bear?’”

Thus, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness,”—the way of becoming righteous, or justified, which He hath appointed,—he went “about to establish,” at least did not know how to be justified otherwise than by, “his own righteousness,” or works; (poor “filthy rags,” Isai. lxiv. 6;) expecting to be justified “by the works of the law,” and not “by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which is of God,” appointed and approved by Him, “through faith,

without the deeds of the law." Little knowing that "to him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness: even as David" (who lived so long ago, to show that it is not a novel doctrine) "describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (See Rom. x. 3; iii. 20-28; and iv. 5-8.)

He became wearied in the multitude of his counsels; and seeking not in God's way, it fared with him accordingly. For still, although he sought for rest, he found it not, because he sought it not aright. These were indeed "the days of" his invincible "ignorance," at which, therefore, the God of love graciously "winked." He knew not, because as yet he had no one to teach him. "How," as he says, "could I do otherwise? I had not the Bible to instruct me; for I never had read it, except a little at school, when I was about eleven years old. Woe to you," he adds, "ye blind guides," (meaning the Romish clergy,) "ye have taken away the key of knowledge, that is, the word of God, from the people. It is this which unfolds the hidden treasures of His will, and free grace towards mankind. While, therefore, I remained ignorant of this, no wonder that I went on in error, and fought 'as one that beateth the air.'"

But now the true Teacher began more powerfully to manifest Himself to him, although as yet he knew Him not. "The Spirit of truth proceeding from the Father and the Son" wrought in him daily a still deeper solicitude about the great busi-

ness of his salvation. Among others of his reflections and pursuits in reference thereto, he began to think more seriously than ever of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and of his own connexions with her; resolving that, whatever might be the consequence, he would both do, and avoid, whatever appeared to him might, in any measure, contribute to the true life of his soul. Thus, hitherto,

“ Drawn by a secret power, he flew,
Nor stay’d to prop the Papal throne,
The truth determined to pursue,
And panting for a God unknown :
By works of legal righteousness,
He blindly sought the grace to’ obtain,
But could not find the paths of peace,
But labour’d through the fire in vain.”

CHAPTER IV.

Of his forsaking the Church of Rome.

A VARIETY of incidents contributed to this part of his conduct. He was first made deeply concerned about the weighty affair of his own salvation; and then began to think seriously of the influence which his religious connexions might have thereon, which prepared him for attending to whatever he, at any time, either read, or had spoken to him, on this head.

That which outwardly contributed most thereto was the instance of his brother, of whom he had learned Latin: “a man,” to use his own words, “of tolerable learning, and designed for a Popish priest. But, seeing many errors among them, he renounced Popery.”

About the eighteenth year of his age, while he was a strict observer of the rites of the Romish Church, this brother, whose relinquishing it was some years before, began frequently to discourse with him concerning the principles of the Romanists. "But I strenuously," says he, "though ignorantly, withstood him; alleging, in my defence, the traditions and canons of the Church; while he, on the contrary, appealed 'to the law and to the testimony.' He often said to me, 'My brother, why do you not read God's Word? Lay aside prejudice, and let us reason together.'

"To the same purpose spake another person in the neighbourhood, one Mr. Philip Geyer, a Protestant, and well versed in controversy. 'Mr. Walsh, you are a sober young man,' (so indeed I was generally thought to be, though God knows I was drunk with enmity against Him,) 'and what pity it is that you do not read the holy Scriptures! Why will you suffer yourself to be deceived by the Pope and his fraternity?'"

Reasonings of this kind, which were occasionally made use of with him from time to time, together with hearing the Scriptures frequently read in his brother's school, put him, at length, upon a diligent consideration of both sides of the question. But, as it generally happens in like cases, an attachment to old sentiments, the prejudices of education, shame, or fear of man, with a variety of other considerations, kept him for some time in strong suspense. His breast was moved with contrary and, therefore, conflicting passions. He revolved in his mind, and rejected many a thought on the head, and again resumed and embraced them. Thus, halting between two opinions, he complains of the corruption of his

heart, and prejudice of his education, which were as smoke upon his soul, so dimming his understanding that he could see nothing clearly.

"I had," continues he, "a custom of repeating, frequently, as I walked by the way, some prayers or articles of faith, which I had learned in my childhood. And walking one day, in September, 1748, in a pleasant field, I was ruminating deeply on what my opponents urged against the doctrine of the Church of Rome. I said in my heart, 'Perhaps all is not right. Peradventure I have been imposed upon. But then how shall I know? How can I be certainly assured whether the priest has led me in the right way?' and to this effect.—Immediately it occurred to my mind, that on God alone I could safely venture my salvation; and that, without doubt, He would lead me by His counsel, if I asked wisdom of Him.

"Then I cried unto the Lord God, and said, 'All things are known to Thee, and Thou seest that I want to worship Thee aright. Show me the way wherein I ought to go, nor suffer me to be deceived by men.'"

The Lord, who apprehended and instructed Saul, when he inquired of Him in astonishment, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts ix.,) attended to, and answered, his prayer; which he did not cease, then, to pour out before Him. "The Father of lights," and the Giver of wisdom to all that ask it, did, according to the adorable methods of His working, instruct and determine his choice in this particular.

To this time and occasion may be referred what, he has more than once told me, determined him with respect to the Popish doctrine of merit, and had

much influence on his entirely renouncing the communion of that Church ; namely, the deep impression on his mind of those words of St. Paul, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." This passage, he assured me, he had not remembered ever to have read or heard ; and that afterwards, when he met with it, (Gal. ii. 21,) it was to him like life from the dead. Truly, O God, "Thy word is a light ;" and by taking heed thereto, this young man's way was cleansed.

Soon after this, he resolved to stand no longer in desponding hesitation, halting between two opinions. "Therefore," says he, "going to my brother, and the other persons who used to converse with me on this head, and, providentially, meeting the two principal ones together, I determined now, once for all, either to convince, or be convinced by, them ; for I had an unfeigned desire to save my soul.

"Proposing, therefore, my design, they desired me to bring a Bible, and with it 'Nelson's Feasts and Fasts of the Church of England.' Accordingly, we began reading and conversing, and continued together till midnight." The result of which was, he now determined no longer to resist conviction. "I was," says he, "constrained to give place to the light of truth. It was so convincing, that I had nothing more to say ; I was judged of all, and, at length, confessed the weakness of my former reasonings, and the strength of those which were opposed to me.

"About one o'clock in the morning I retired to my lodging, and, according to my usual custom, went to prayer ; but now, only to the God of heaven : I no more prayed to any angel or spirit. For I am deeply persuaded that there is but one God, and one

Mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus. Therefore I resolved no longer to suffer any man to beguile me in a voluntary humility, in worshipping either saints or angels. (Col. ii. 18.) These latter I considered, as they are represented, 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.' (Heb. i. 14.) But with regard to any worship being paid to them, one of themselves said, 'See thou do it not: worship God,' (Rev. xix. 10,) God only.

"All my sophisms on this head were entirely overthrown by a few hours' candid reading the holy Scriptures, which now became as a lantern to my feet, and a lamp to my paths, directing me in the way wherein I should go. I could see no manner of authority, either in the Old Testament or the New, for invoking any saint or apostle whatsoever. God, the triune God, is alone the proper object of prayer, and of all Divine worship." He is likewise "a jealous God," (Exod. xx. 5,) and will not give His glory to another.

"Say, then, ye worms of earth, to whom
Will ye your glorious God compare?
Vainly through all His works ye roam,
To find Jehovah's likeness there.

"The vile idolater belies
His image with a golden shrine;
To counterfeit the Godhead tries,
And stocks and stones become divine.

"Nothing the creature adds to Him,
From whom their borrow'd being flow'd;
Who, self-sufficient and supreme,
Exists, the One eternal God.

"He, high enthroned above all height,
A partner in His work disdains:
In power and knowledge infinite,
The self-directed Spirit reigns!"

Before His glorious majesty the hosts of heaven, "angels and authorities, principalities and powers, thrones and dominions," veiling their faces, fall down in lowly prostrations, while they adore Him (whom all should adore!) that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb, that liveth for ever and ever.

Not many days after, he fell into discourse with his father on the head, and informed him, that he was minded to forsake the Church of Rome, being clearly convinced she was not that infallible or pure Church he once esteemed her; "but rather," to use his own words, "an harlot, who had committed spiritual and vile adultery. My father," adds he, "was strongly provoked, and produced his strong reasons to overthrow all I had said. I dared not but listen to him, which I did with much attention. But the more he argued, the more I was confirmed in my former resolution."

Being now fully satisfied, and deliberately determined, he resolved to omit no becoming method of testifying the same. And, accordingly, (having no temporal interest to serve thereby, as may be undeniably plain to every one,) he, without farther delay, publicly and in form renounced his former communion; abjured the errors of the Church of Rome, and thenceforward regularly attended the service of the Church of England.

He was greatly delighted with the Prayers.* (As

* This brings to my remembrance a passage not quite foreign to the occasion, in "A short History of the Attempts that have been made to convert the Popish Natives of Ireland to the Established Religion:" (printed at London, 1731:)—

The Rev. Nicholas Brown, a rector in the diocese of Clogher, applied himself with great zeal and industry to the conversion of the Irish, in the year 1702. Understanding the language thoroughly, he appointed public meetings, and contrived to be with them just

was St. Austin, at his first attendance, with the service of the Church in general. *Confess.*, book ix., chap. 6. His heart melted with divine sweetness, and his eyes flowed down with tears of love.) A certain Providence seemed to direct the very matter of the first sermon which he heard there. "The first text," says he, "I heard preached on at church was, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' (Mark xvi. 16.)

"Yet, alas! how little did I know of believing! being taught and accustomed to call by the name of faith the peculiar principles of the Church of Rome. But I have now learned a better lesson, and know that rightly to believe is one of the greatest things in the world.

"And now that I have left the Church of Rome, I nevertheless declare," (such was his ingenuity,) "that I think there are many sincere souls among them. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge. Many of them have justice, mercy, and truth; and may, (notwithstanding many errors in sentiment, and therefore in practice, through invincible ignorance,) since, as is God's majesty, so is His mercy, be dealt with accordingly."

There have been, doubtless, and still are, amongst them, some burning and shining lights; persons when mass was ended, and before the congregation was dispersed. He then read our Prayers, and preached to them in Irish in the open air. Upon one of these occasions, the priest, being much troubled at seeing his congregation attending with so much pleasure and devotion, told them with a loud voice, "that our Church had stolen those Prayers from the Church of Rome." To which a grave old native answered, "that truly if it was so, they had stolen the best, as thieves generally do."

who, whatever their particular sentiments may be, are devoted to the service of Jesus Christ, according as their light and opportunities admit. And, in reality, whatever opinions people may hold, they are most approved of God, whose tempers and behaviour correspond most with the model of His holy word. This, however, can be no justification of general and public unscriptural tenets: such, as has been often proved, are those of the Church of Rome.

“It may be asked, then, Why did I leave their communion, since I thought so favourably of them? I answer, Because I was abundantly convinced that, as a Church, they have erred from the right way, and adulterated the truths of God with the inventions and traditions of men; which the Scriptures, and even celebrated writers of themselves, abundantly testify. God is my witness herein, that the sole motive which induced me to leave them was an unfeigned desire to know the way of God more perfectly, in order to the salvation of my soul. For although I then felt, and do yet feel, my heart to be, as the prophet speaks, ‘deceitful and desperately wicked,’ with regard to God; yet I was sincere in my reformation, having from the Holy Spirit an earnest desire to save my soul, and prepare to meet my God.

“If it should be still asked, But could I not be saved, supposing I had never left the Church of Rome? I answer, If I had never known the truth of the Scriptures concerning the way of salvation, nor been convinced that their principles were anti-scriptural, then I think I might possibly have been saved in her communion, the merciful God making allowance for my invincible ignorance. But, on the other hand, I freely profess that now, since God

hath enlightened my mind, and given me to see 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' if I had still continued a member of the Church of Rome, I could not have been saved.

"With regard to others, I say nothing. I know that every man must bear his own burden, and give an account of himself to God. To their own Master, both they and I must stand or fall for ever. But love, however, and tender compassion for their souls, constrain me to pour out a prayer to God in their behalf.

"All souls are Thine, O Lord God, and Thou wilt all to come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. For this end Thou didst give Thy only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. I beseech Thee, therefore, O eternal God, show Thy tender mercies upon those poor souls who have been long deluded by 'the god of this world,' the Pope, and his clergy. Jesus, Thou Lover of souls, and Friend of sinners, send to them Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead them. O, let Thy bowels yearn over them, and call those straying sheep, now perishing for lack of knowledge, to the light of Thy word, which is able to make them wise to salvation, through faith which is in Thee!"

This prayer was answered, in part, in himself; by whom, not long after, God was pleased truly to convert several of that communion throughout the kingdom.

CHAPTER V.

Some further Account of his Progress in the Way of Life, with other Reasons of his Conduct with regard to the Church of Rome.

THE affair of his entirely renouncing all further communion with the Romish Church, and formally declaring himself a member of the Church of England, being now over, he set himself to read, with much diligence, the holy Scriptures, together with the writings of some of the most eminent of our Protestant divines. And hereby he received further light every day, being more and more fully persuaded that his conduct was right, and conducive to his true happiness.

By these means he began, likewise, to see into the nature of the Gospel, and the one only true way which it points out to life and blessedness, grace and glory. "Now," says he, "I begin to discern clearly, that it is 'the blood of Christ' alone which 'cleanseth from sin;' and that 'by one offering' of Himself, once for all, 'He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified:' (Heb. x. 14:) perfectly accomplished, without any need of other helps, or repetitions of the same, all that was necessary in order to the justification, sanctification, and glorification of all believers.

"I likewise became now more clearly sensible of the errors which I formerly held; as, first, thinking that my own works could merit something from God; secondly, vainly imagining, that there is a place for the purgation of sin after death. When at

any time, therefore, I was asked now, why I had left the Church of Rome, I could answer upon good and solid grounds, Because I am well assured that the doctrines of merit, (to speak of no more,) and works of supererogation, are contrary both to reason and Scripture:—to reason; it being absurd to suppose that a creature, receiving life, and breath, and all things from its Creator, should be able to love, adore, and obey Him more than is required of him as his indispensable duty to the Proprietor of the universe:—to Scripture; being flatly contrary to the words of Christ, ‘When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say,’ that is, take knowledge, ‘we are unprofitable servants.’ (Luke xvii. 10.)

“Beside, if ‘the blood of Christ,’ the merit of all He hath done and suffered, ‘cleanseth from all sin,’ (1 John i. 7,) what imaginable need can there be of the fire of purgatory? Surely when *all* sin is cleansed, or taken away, there can be *none* remaining.” Alas, for those who trust for safety to such a staff of a broken reed! deferring the present opportunities and means of deliverance from sin and death, under the pretence of some future means of purgation from sin in the invisible world. The business of salvation is a *now* affair. (2 Cor. vi. 2.) It is in this life it must be wrought out, or never. We are accountable, and rewardable, only for “the deeds done in the body.” The soul that is holy, leaving the body, will remain so for ever: as, on the contrary, whoso leaves this world in an unholy state, must be unalterably so, and therefore miserable for ever; “for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave,” (שאול—that is,

the place, or state, of the dead,) "whither thou goest." (Eccles. ix. 10.) Yes,

"The sinner, as he falls he lies,
Shut up in his own place."

"If all the light of this world was to be immediately at once extinguished, all human souls, that were not in some real degree of regeneration, would immediately find themselves but the rage of fire, and horror of darkness." O, then, thou poor sinner, whoever thou art, repent, repent, and turn to God, whilst thou hast flesh upon thee; for, as long as that lasts, the kingdom of God is "nigh at hand." But if thou diest without true conversion, alas! better thou hadst never been born. For then "black lakes, bottomless pits, ages of a gnawing worm, and a fire that never ceases to burn, will stand between thee and the kingdom of heaven for ever."

"To prevent all this, and make thee a son of the first resurrection, Jesus Christ, God and man, the only-begotten Son of God's infinite love, came into the world in the name, and under the character, of infinite pity, boundless compassion, inexpressible meekness, and bleeding love; nameless humility, never-ending patience, longsuffering, and bowels of redeeming mercy; called the Lamb of God, who, with all these supernatural virtues, taketh away the sins of the world."

His now increasing knowledge in the things of God, his ability, from the holy Scriptures, to distinguish between truth and error, became daily, and justly, matter of his thanksgiving to God. But yet his unregenerate nature was not, could not be, truly at rest. The word of God was now, indeed, his study and delight. But it served, likewise, by show-

ing him how his heart and life must be, in order to constitute him an approved servant of God, more deeply to distress him. The commandment, in its spiritual and extensive meaning, still dissecting his inward parts, slew him; (Rom. vii. 8-11;) so that he was clearly and distressingly sensible of his death "in trespasses and sins." His conviction and anguish of spirit became, therefore, more afflictive than ever.

The small cessation from the pain of his inward state, which the interval of his relinquishing Popery afforded, served now only to augment his sorrow, to find that, after all, the great affair was, however, yet to do. And such was his present anxiety, that he even forgot, or neglected, to eat his bread. "My conscience," says he, "still condemned me. There was no rest in my bones by reason of sin." And yet, meaning to make sure work, he desired to know the uttermost of his evil and danger. To this end he read those passages, both Divine and human, which seemed most to condemn him. "For I was willing," adds he, "to know the worst of my condition: not, indeed, that this was always the case. Sometimes the devil, and the corruption of my nature, so far prevailed as to hush my conscience, and drown my convictions, by a variety of thoughts and things."

The light, notwithstanding, did not cease to shine in his heart; neither were its glimmerings wholly unperceived by him, so that although there were many occurrences and temptations which tended to retard his progress, and which sometimes slackened his endeavours, nevertheless the weighty concern of his soul soon recurred. Conscience, as he says, stood up for God; still calling to, and keeping in, his

remembrance the guilt of sin, and the necessity of his true conversion.*

Thus far did he labour through the furnace of heart-tormenting conflict; assaulted, on one hand, by the Romanists, who still wrought him all the trouble they possibly could, both by calumny and contention; and, on the other, by "the ruler of the darkness of this world," Satan, and his emissaries, seeking to devour him. Our Lord's words, John xvi. 21, (compare with Isai. xxvi. 17,) were literally verified in him; as, indeed, they are, more or less, in every one that is truly born again. He travailed in birth, and was in sorrow and pain to be delivered. The agony of his heart frequently extorted from him complaints (not, indeed, in those very words, but) to this effect: "The sorrows of death have compassed me about, and the pains of hell have got hold upon

* The following lines, concerning conscience, and her office, shall be their own apology for inserting them on this occasion:—

"Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,
Loudly convinces, and severely pains:
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the gross act alone employs her pen:
She reconnoitres fancy's airy band;
A watchful foe!
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity:
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
Writes our whole history; which Death shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear;
And Judgment publish,—publish to more worlds
Than this; and endless Age in groans resound.
—Such that sleeper in thy breast!"

me!" He found trouble and heaviness. In his distress he cried unto the Lord, and said, "O Lord, I beseech Thee deliver my soul! I am oppressed, undertake for me."

And thus he remained for some time, waiting and longing for his God, even as the thirsty ground for showers. His sorrow, it is true, was often interspersed with gleams of sweetly-reviving hope, that, yet a little while, and He whom he sought would come, and would not tarry; while his very pulse still beat, "Make no long tarrying, O my God; make haste, my beloved, and come away. Be Thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." The Lord did indeed wait to be gracious to him, and was exalted in having mercy upon him. He brought "to the birth, and gave strength to bring forth." For the spirit of heaviness, he afterwards received the garments of praise, and for mourning the oil of joy.

CHAPTER VI.

Of some Particulars previous to his Conversion.

AFTER having made use of every means which either men or books could suggest, but without the desired effect, (being now in the nineteenth year of his age,) as he returned to his lodging, one evening, in the city of Limerick, March 17th, 1749, he saw an uncommonly large concourse of people assembled in a place called the Parade, adjoining to the main street. He turned aside to see what it meant; and, perceiving a man preaching to the people in the open air, (a thing then exceedingly strange, because

quite new in Ireland,) he eagerly stopped to know what he said.

And hearing him, (Mr. R. S.,) from Matt. xi. 29, affectionately and earnestly entreat all persons to "come to Jesus Christ, that they might find rest to their souls;" and withal exhorting them to search the Scriptures, and see for themselves if what he said was not true; it filled him with wonder, and with desire to know more of this matter.

He had of a long time sorely felt the want of rest, that is, happiness in his soul. And, notwithstanding all his endeavours to obtain it, like the poor woman in the Gospel, (Mark v. 25, &c.,) "who spent all that she had upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse," his case became every day more insupportable. A pressing invitation, therefore, to partake of, and an assurance of finding, the very thing he so wanted, could not fail of being acceptable to him.

So impenetrable is the abyss of God's judgments! So excellent in counsel, so wonderful in working! "Great things doeth He, which who can comprehend?" He had prepared the soul of His servant to receive with inexpressible joy the Gospel of peace, and sent it him in a way which he least of all expected, and which the wisdom of man would never have made choice of. Thus,

"While yet he toil'd, a sudden cry
Proclaim'd the' approaching multitude,
Who told of Jesus passing by,
Of free redemption in His blood:
Up started light; the beggar blind
He sprang the healing touch to meet,
Cast all his filthy rags behind,
And groan'd for faith at Jesu's feet."

"But here," says he, "it may be needful, in order

the better to understand some particulars which will be hereafter related, to premise a few things relative to this preacher, and the people to whom he belonged.

1. He was one of the people called Methodists, and a member of the Church of England. 2. This people began to preach Christ, and justification through His blood, about the year 1738, having had their beginning at Oxford, in the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley; the former a Fellow of Lincoln College, and the latter Student of Christ Church. These two brothers, having obtained mercy themselves, were called of God to publish His love to others likewise, by preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to every creature that would hear the joyful sound. Accordingly, out they go into the lanes and highways, crying in the 'voice of wisdom to the sons of men,' beseeching and compelling sinners to turn to God, to come to that 'feast of marrow and fat things' which He hath prepared for all who will but accept of life and salvation. (See Luke xiv. 16-24; Prov. viii. 1-5; and compare with Prov. i. 24.)

"After these servants of God had been thus employed for some time, it pleased their Divine Master to send forth other labourers also into His harvest, to assist in the same blessed work; not, indeed, such as human wisdom would have appointed,—the great or wise men of this world,—but quite the contrary: the poor, (for the most part,) and, as St. Paul says, the base and weak, that thus, leaving no room for boasting or glorying in man, 'whoso glorieth might glory in the Lord.' (1 Cor. i. 25-31.)

"Some of these, after preaching the Gospel in the streets and highways to their own countrymen, brought the glad tidings to Ireland also; where, going about from place to place, through cities and

villages, they freely declared what they had so freely received, to every one that would hear. And, glory be to God, their labour of love was not in vain. He that sent them, gave their word His blessing, so that many received it gladly; and, having felt its power, to this day bring forth fruit with patience,—the fruit of righteousness, to the glory of God.”

It was some weeks before he had opportunity of hearing them again, being obliged to take care of his school in the country. On his next return to Limerick he heard another of them, (Mr. T. W.,) and liked their preaching still better. But his fondness for, and attachment to, the word of God would not admit of his taking things of so high a nature upon trust. He therefore compared their doctrine with the word of God, and with the Articles and Homilies (which were now, likewise, his secondary great standards of truth) of the Church of England; and, “I found it,” says he, “to be consonant with both. I became daily more and more attached to them, and their manner of living increased my affection for them. They appeared to me to be true followers of Christ and His apostles, adorning the doctrine of God in all things.

“When they had preached the Gospel at Limerick for some time, they came over to New-Market, a village where I then resided, about eight miles from thence. In a little time there was a society formed.” (So they called those who met weekly together, in order to sing the praises of God, to pray to Him, and to help each other on to heaven.) “To these I joined myself a member, September 29th, 1749, in order to be more fully instructed in the way of salvation.”

CHAPTER VII.

Giving a further Account of the State of his Soul, particularly of his deep Convictions.

GOD had, by this time, made plain His way before his face. His holy word had fully informed his understanding how a sinner can find favour with God. His doctrinal scruples were all removed, and he wanted only the feeling possession of what he believed attainable, and saw as at a distance; to know, by happy experience, "the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed." (Luke i. 4.)

His soul reached out with vehemency of desire to the "mark of the prize of his calling." But yet he could not "lay hold on the hope set before him." He could not break the bondage of unbelief, of which he was now deeply convinced, and under which he groaned continually. In short, he felt what can only be understood in a like manner, and therefore not easily explained: the sorrows and strugglings, as well as joys, of the truly regenerate, being of such a nature, that strangers to that happy change can have very imperfect conceptions of. (1 Cor. ii. 11.)

His state can hardly be better described than by the following lines:—

"Surrounded by His power I stand;
His work on other souls I see;
His love appears on every hand;
But, O! He hides Himself from me.

"The pain of absence still I prove,
Sick of desire, but not of love;
Weary of life, I ever groan,
And long to lay my burden down.

“O, give me, Jesus,—give me more ;
 Thy mercies to my soul reveal :
 Alas ! I *see* their endless store,
 Yet, O, I cannot, cannot *feel* !”

So it pleased God to suffer him to wait for some time, looking and longing for the beams of His brightness to revive and rejoice his weary spirit.

He particularly describes his state of conviction, the manner in which he perceived himself wrought upon, as follows :—

“1. The Lord convinced me of my bosom sin; that which did most easily beset me; representing the heinousness of it in various circumstances.

“2. All my other abominations, likewise,—sins in general, of omission and commission,—were set in array before me, as an army ready to devour me; or as so many devils, ready to tear me in pieces. God wrote them down in large characters, so that I might well say, ‘My sins are ever before me.’

“3. I was clearly convinced, that not only my sins, but likewise what I called my duties, were an abomination unto the Lord. My righteousness appeared ‘as filthy rags.’ The ‘corrupt tree could not bring forth good fruit.’

“4. The same Spirit convinced me that I was an unbeliever; that I had not true faith, and, therefore, no part nor lot in the Lord Jesus Christ. As an unbeliever, I was ‘condemned already,’ and the ‘wrath of God abode upon me.’ (John iii.) I assented, indeed, to everything revealed in the Bible; yet, I now clearly perceived, I lacked the very true Christian faith. I learned from the Methodists, so called, and had it confirmed to me by the New Testament, that whosoever has true faith, has with it the remission of sins, (Rom. iv. 5; v. 1;

viii. 1; John iii. 18; Acts xiii. 39; 1 John v. 10,) and is at peace with God. I read, that 'whosoever believeth is born of God;' and 'he that is born of God sinneth not.' (1 John iii. 9; v. 1.) But I sinned; and thence inferred I had not faith, neither was 'born of God.'

"5. I was, moreover, deeply convinced that I could not help myself; that I was utterly unable to work, either repentance, faith, or holiness, in my own soul; and that it was by grace alone I could be saved.

"6. I was without comfort, and miserable. My soul was grieved, and my heart fainted within me. I found labour and sorrow beyond expression. Worldly comforts availed nought. I had no rest, night or day. When I prayed, I was troubled; when I heard a sermon, I was pierced, as with darts and arrows. Whenever I either read or conversed, still I was broken and bruised in heart. Thus was I stripped of all, and wretched, and blind, and naked; having neither faith, nor power, holiness, nor happiness. Truly, there was no sound part in me. All was 'wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.' Often I could neither sleep nor eat. The affliction of my soul so affected my body, that, at length, I was obliged to take to my bed.

"7. I saw, by the same light of the Holy Spirit, the ground of all this; namely, original sin. This, I felt, was the source of all my misery and helplessness. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned.' (Rom. v. 12.) Here I saw the root of all evil. Hence are we 'children of wrath;' banished from God, and the tree of life."

This was his state about the year 1749; and, in

substance, I believe, (though all do not so circumstantially attend to it,) agrees with the experience of the children of God.

One would not, however, attempt to fix a determinate point; making the progress of the work of God in one, or a thousand persons, a standard by which to judge of the genuineness of the experience of others. "There are diversities of operations by the same Spirit. But it is the same God who worketh all in all." And these operations are (according to the wisdom that weigheth the states of the children of men) proportioned to their different capacities, complexions, and various circumstances of time, age, education, opportunities, and the like.

With some souls it pleaseth our Lord to deal more gently than with others; as (to mention no more examples) in the case of Lydia and the jailer. (Acts xvi.) The latter, trembling and terrified, "fell down" prostrate before Paul and Silas, and said, in the utmost consternation, "What must I do to be saved?" While the former, without any such previous terror, that we read of, had her heart gently "opened to attend unto" and receive the words of eternal life, "which were spoken of Paul." And there are, no doubt, thousands of resembling instances at this day.

"One way, among the diversity of the Holy Ghost's operations, whereby He cleanseth souls, is, to feast them for some moments with so much of the substance of things hoped for, as shall captivate them for their whole life after; and, in one taste of the sweetness of God, do the work of a thousand arguments."

But, in general, it may be observed, that, with regard to those whom God intends chiefly for the

service of other souls, He gives them to feel, as they are able to bear, the uttermost of their nature's death,—the bitterness and desert of the sin that dwells in the heart, as well as the wicked works of their life,—before He shows them His salvation; to the intent, no doubt, that, being feelingly acquainted with the evil nature of sin, and the wretchedness of an unregenerate state, they may be the better capable of sympathizing with, and counselling, others in like circumstances, and be quickened in their endeavours of saving souls from death. So we read of St. Austin, Martin Luther,* Mr. Haliburton, Bolton, (to instance in no more,) and many others, who felt as it were the pangs of hell, and roared through extremity of anguish, before they were enabled to call Jesus, Lord, “by the Holy Ghost;” to appropriate to themselves the redemption that is in His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

But in all who are begetting again to newness of life, there is a deep consciousness of want. And there never has been an instance of true conversion among grown persons, where the soul did not previously feel its poverty, guilt, or danger, in a greater or less degree. Our Saviour heals none who have not a feeling want, producing earnest desires of being healed. It is the “weary” and the “heavy laden” whom He calls to come to Him, that they may find rest to their souls. He is the “living bread,” and “the water of life,” for which only awakened souls hunger and thirst, and with which alone they can be satisfied. Thus:—

* Of Luther (with whose condition that of Mr. Bolton was nearly parallel) it is said, “The very venom of his convictions drank up his spirits, and his body seemed dead, so that neither speech, sense, blood, nor heat, appeared in him at one time for a whole day.”

"When sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning showers,
Her seed celestial then glad Wisdom sows,
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil."

HAVING mentioned St. Austin, with reference to the usual manner of our Lord's dealing with souls, intended for the service of others; and considering the resemblance which, in some parts of his experience, there is with the experience of him before us; I persuade myself it will not be unacceptable to some readers to subjoin a short account of the travail of his soul, above fourteen hundred years ago, in his own words:—

"Thou, O Lord, didst turn me about towards myself; and tookest me from behind my back, where I had placed me, whilst I had no mind to observe myself, that I might see how crooked, how ugly, and deformed a thing I was; covered over with scabs and ulcers: and I beheld, and abhorred. But I, then a wretched, very wretched young man, had also in the first dawning of that my youth, begged of Thee chastity; and had said, 'Give me chastity and continency; but yet awhile do not give it.' For I feared Thou shouldest hear me too soon, and presently heal me of that disease and concupiscence which I wished rather might be satiated than extinguished. But now was the day come in which I was laid naked to myself, and my conscience began to reproach me. I was inwardly corroded, and extremely confounded.

"Amidst this great controversy within, which I hotly disputed with my soul in the closet of my heart, troubled as well in countenance as in mind,

my eyes, forehead, cheeks, colour, the accent of my voice, more spoke my passion than words could. There was a little garden belonging to my lodging which I had the use of. Thither this tumult in my breast carried me away, where none might hinder the hot contention which was engaged within me, until concluded in that issue, which Thou already knewest, but not yet I. Only I was in a sober rage, and suffering a death that would beget life: well knowing what evil I then was; not knowing what good, within a little while, I was to be. I fretted in my spirit, and raged, with most implacable indignation against myself, whilst all my bones cried out, 'From whence such a monster? and how can this be?' Let Thy mercy enlighten me, and let me inquire, 'Whence such a monster? and how can this be?'

"Thus sick of mind, and thus tormented, I was accusing myself much more severely than formerly, and tumbling and winding to and fro in my chain, till it was wholly broken off; a small piece only of which now held me, yet held me still. And thou, O Lord, pressedst sore upon me in mine inner parts, with a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame. And the point of time, in which I was to become another man, how much it approached nearer, struck in me so much more horror. Yet it did not make me to recoil, or quite turn away; but only to stand in suspense.

"Such was the contest acted within in my heart, only between me and myself. But, as soon as more profound meditation had drawn out, from the very bottom of this sink, and laid on a heap all my misery before the view of my soul, there arose in me a mighty tempest, bringing with it great showers of

tears. I, under a certain fig-tree, threw down myself, I know not how, and gave liberty to my tears ; and the rivers of my eyes ran apace. And not, indeed, in these words, but to this purpose, I said, ‘And Thou, Lord, how long? How long wilt Thou be angry? for ever? Remember not my former iniquities.’ (Psalm lxxix. 5, 8.) For I well perceived I was still possessed, and withheld by them, and therefore cast out such miserable complaints, ‘How long? How long? To-morrow, and to-morrow? Why not presently? Why not this very hour an end to my filthiness?’

“These things I uttered as I wept, with a most bitter contrition of spirit: and, behold, I heard a voice, as from a neighbouring house, as of a boy or girl, I know not whether, in a singing note, saying, and often repeating, ‘*Tolle, lege; Tolle, lege:—*Take up, and read; Take up, and read.’ And presently, my countenance being altered, I began, with much attention, to consider whether children were wont, in any kind of play, to sing such words: nor could I call to mind, that I had anywhere heard the like.

“Whereupon, suppressing the course of my tears, I rose up, interpreting it to be nothing but a Divine admonition, that I should open the book, and read the place I first light upon. So, getting up hastily, I returned to the place where I had been sitting before; for there I had left the apostle’s book.” (St. Paul’s Epistles, which, about this time, he read chiefly.) “I caught it up, opened it, read in silence the piece of the chapter on which I first cast mine eyes: ‘Not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make

not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.)

"I could read no farther, nor was there need ; for at the end of those lines, as it were, with a new light of confidence and security streaming into my soul, the darkness of all former doubting and hesitancy was dispelled.

"O Jesus Christ, my Helper, and my Redeemer ! how sweet, on a sudden, became it to me to submit my neck to Thy easy yoke, and my shoulders unto Thy light burden ! And what before it was my fear to lose, how was it now my joy to dismiss ! For Thou, the true and the supreme sweetness, didst expel them from me. Thou expelledst them, and Thyself enteredst into me instead of them : more delicious than all delights, but not to flesh and blood ; more bright and glorious than all light, but to the inward, hidden man, exalted above the heights of all honour, but not to those who exalt themselves. And now my infant tongue began to converse with Thee, my ambition, and my riches, and my salvation, my Lord God !"

CHAPTER VIII.

Of his finding Rest to his Soul.

"TRULY my soul waiteth only upon God ; for from Him cometh my salvation," was the present language of his heart. Although the night had hitherto hung upon his soul, yet he frequently saw the promise of deliverance at a distance. But now the "day-spring from on high" began to dawn upon

him. The beamings of the Divine glory, even the glorious love of God, in Jesus Christ, shone around him, and brought at length to his weary spirit the joyous day of salvation; pardon and peace; life, and liberty, and love: the manner of which he describes as follows:—

“Having given an account of my convictions, I think it may not be improper to relate likewise how the Son of the promise was begotten and brought forth in me. And this also is the work of the Holy Ghost, convincing ‘of righteousness’ as He doth ‘of sin.’

“1. He kindled in my soul earnest desires towards God. There was a tenderness in my heart. It began to warm and dissolve after it was broken by the law, and scorched by the wrath of God; and to be a little comforted and encouraged.

“2. Light began to spring up in my mind: I saw at length, not my guilt only, but likewise the all-sufficiency of Christ and His atonement. I was convinced that He came ‘to seek and to save’ lost sinners; that ‘He tasted death for every man;’ that ‘He willeth all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth,’ in order thereto. O, what a glorious view had I of the mercy of God, in giving His Son, and of the unspeakable love and pity of Christ in dying for sinners! I was constrained to cry out, ‘What manner of love is this, wherewith Thou hast loved us? What is man, that Thou shouldest be mindful of him?’ But I could not yet say, that I had ‘redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of my sins.’ I did not experience the merit of His death, applied to my soul.

“3. But I had strong hope that God would be

merciful to my unrighteousness, and blot out my sins for His name's sake. I could, as it were, see the promise and pardon held forth to me, though as yet I was not able to lay hold of them. At certain seasons, indeed, I could be almost confident that there was 'no condemnation' to me; and could venture my soul upon Christ, for life and salvation. But this soon vanished away again; which convinced me it was not justifying faith, else the witness would be in my heart; for 'he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.' (1 John v. 10.) 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' (Gal. iv. 6.)

"4. There was kindled in my soul a still more vehement thirst after Christ. Nothing could now satisfy me short of the assured knowledge, that I had an interest in His blood. My soul was sick with fervent longings. I esteemed all things but dung and dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. He appeared altogether lovely to me. I beheld all glory, all happiness, all riches, and honour in the Saviour. I had no desire after other things; all relish for them was gone: 'give me Christ, or else I die!' Sin lost its power, so that no sin had dominion over me. I was so taken up in beholding the Lord Jesus, in reading, and in prayer, that I had no desire of anything else. Neither 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, nor the pride of life,' had any power over me. But yet I could not say, I was then a believer. I had, indeed, an utter hatred to all sin, and power to forsake everything that I believed to be offensive to God, and contrary to the holy will of my Lord Jesus, whom I sought and desired above all things visible or invisible.

"5. And now, about four months after my most deep awakenings, and joining the Methodist society, the clear day began to shine, and the Lord, who 'is rich in mercy,' visited me with His salvation. He brought me out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. The particular manner of which was as follows:—

"Coming into the room where we were accustomed to meet together, to hear the word of exhortation; before preaching began, I sat musing and meditating. My soul was looking out and longing for Christ, as the watchman for the morning, or the thirsty land for showers. The congregation being assembled, the servant of God (Mr. W. T.) poured out his soul in prayer. And as he prayed, the power of the Lord came down in the midst of us. The 'windows of heaven were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness.' My heart melted like wax before the fire; especially at the mention of those words, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength?' (Isai. lxiii. 1.) And again, at the singing those words in the hymn:—

'Behold the Saviour of mankind,
Nail'd to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that Him inclined
To bleed and die for thee!

'Tis done! the precious ransom's paid;
Receive my soul, He cries:
See, where He bows His sacred head!
He bows His head, and dies.'

"The former words in the prayer, and these in the hymn, came with such power to my heart, that I was constrained to cry out, 'Bless the Lord, O my

soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name: for He hath forgiven all mine iniquity, and healed my diseases.'

"And now was I divinely assured that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. The Spirit of God bore witness with my spirit, that I was a child of God. 'Mercy and truth met together' in my heart: 'righteousness and peace kissed each other.' Yea, so great was the deliverance, and so strong the consolation, that I could not contain myself. I broke out into tears of joy and love. Having obtained such mercy, I could not but join with the angels, (Luke xv. 10,) to sing praises to 'Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb,' who so loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood. A new song was indeed put into my mouth, even of thanksgiving unto my God.

'Honour, and might, and thanks, and praise,
I render to my pard'ning God;
Extol the riches of Thy grace,
And spread Thy saving name abroad;
That only name to sinners given,
Which lifts poor dying worms to heaven.

'Me in my blood Thy love pass'd by,
And stopp'd, my ruin to retrieve;
Wept o'er my soul Thy pitying eye,
Thy bowels yearn'd, and sounded, Live!
Dying, I heard the welcome sound,
And pardon in Thy mercy found.

'No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the' eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.'

"I had often in private cried aloud to God, yet it was not till now that I did so in the congregation. But, my wound being healed, a necessity was laid upon me to declare what the Lord had done for my soul. In the same hour another, who sat next to me, was filled with joy and peace in believing. We both withdrew to another room, and gave thanks and praise to God together.

'All glory and praise to Jesus our Lord !
His ransoming grace we gladly record :
His bloody oblation, and death on the tree,
Hath purchased salvation and heaven for me !

'The Saviour hath died for me and for you ;
The blood is applied, the record is true ;
The Spirit bears witness, and speaks in the blood,
And gives us the fitness for living with God !'

"And now I felt of a truth that faith in Christ is 'the substance,' or subsistence, 'of things hoped for,' and an 'evidence of things not seen.'" God, and the things of the invisible world, of which he had only heard before by "the hearing of the ear," appeared now in their true light, as substantial realities, and for him. O, yes :—

"Faith lends its realizing light ;
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly ;
The' Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.

"The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,
With strong, commanding evidence,
Their heavenly origin display.

"God through Himself we understand,
When He Himself in us hath shone ;
We see His all-creating hand,
And feel a God through faith alone."

“I could now lay hold on Christ, and the promises of God through Him. Faith in His blood brought heaven into my breast, and filled me with ‘righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ It gave me to see a reconciled God, and an all-sufficient Saviour. And thus was it an evidence to me. Through this faith I could say, ‘Christ loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.’ O, this is the gift of God! ‘Faith of the operation of the Holy Ghost.’”

And it is a gift which God delighteth to bestow; and which souls, feeling the want of, and asking of Him, are sure to receive. Our Lord is no respecter of persons; “for every one that asketh receiveth; and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” He rejecteth, despiseth no man, but such as, abusing their own mercies, reject and stay away from Him. He delighteth in the prosperity of His creatures, and not in the death of sinners. Fear not, then, thou poor afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted: thy God will come and save thee. What, though thou liest “among the pots,” scorched and black through temptation and sin, yet continue to look to Jesus! He will make thee “as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.” Ruined and forsaken, deformed and destitute, as thou seemest to appear, nevertheless, “I,” saith Jehovah, “will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.” Thy wilderness soul shall be “like Eden,” and thy desert heart “like the garden of the Lord. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror,

for it shall not come near thee. Yea, thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God!" Only wait at the posts of wisdom's doors. Strive to enter in. Let "One thing I do" be your motto. Determine to know nothing but Jesus, and Him crucified; for it is in Him that all these promises are Yea, and Amen, firm and certain, to every believer. Therefore faint not. Be strong. Yet a little while, and thou shalt prove, to thine eternal comfort, that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him."

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Confirmation of his Soul in the Grace of God, and the happy Effects which it produced in him.

HE lived as in another world. "Behold, God is my salvation," went through the whole of his heart and conduct. His soul was delighted with those good things reserved for, and enjoyed only by, such as love God. He so tasted that the Lord is gracious, as left no room at present for evil reasonings, and entirely engrossed his whole body and soul for God. The overflowings of his joy, corresponding in degree with his former sorrow, rendered him happy beyond all description.

And this, as may be observed in the experience of the faithful, is commonly the case; the peace and joy of justified souls being usually proportionate to their previous distress: God in this respect likewise comforting them according to the time wherein He had showed them trouble. And may not hence be

accounted for, in some measure, the difference in degree, between the sensible enjoyments of the children of God, and that variety of expression whereby different persons describe their condition, who, notwithstanding, may be equally approved of God? The grand inquiry is, "Am I really converted? Am I now at peace, and in fellowship, with God my Saviour?" If so, is not the precise how and when immaterial? Such persons, then, as have been led by slow and gradual steps; who have, by a comparatively easy transition, passed "from darkness to light;" who, being allured and brought "into the wilderness," have been brought out "leaning on the Beloved:" let them give glory to their Deliverer, and not, on this account, perplex themselves with scruples, for having been so gently dealt with. Let them live only for Him, glorying only in His crucified person, in whom they are; and so doing, they shall be finally found approved in the presence of God and His holy angels.

His happiness now received daily increase from the undoubted assurance which he continually received of the genuineness of his change. He proved his work, and had therefore rejoicing in himself. (Gal. vi. 4.) He saw every rising sun with renewed pleasure, and the returning night with added strength: when he lay down, the banner over him was love; even while he slept, his heart waked; and when he awoke, he was still with Him. How fair, and how pleasant art Thou, O Love, for delights! In short,—

"He could not believe
That he ever should grieve,
That he ever should suffer again."

He observes:—"The more I compare my expe-

rience with the word of God, and with the experience of His children, I am the more confirmed that it is no delusion, no fancy, but a real work of God; a saving change wrought in my soul by the Spirit of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am persuaded, however, that the 'natural man' (1 Cor. ii. 14) cannot receive 'the things of the Spirit of God.' He has neither eyes to see, nor a heart to understand them. A stranger doth not intermeddle with this joy. It is 'the hidden manna,' and the 'white stone,' and the 'new name' (of adoption) written thereon, (Rev. ii. 17,) 'which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.' Glory, glory be to God on high!

"Now did I find the yoke of Christ to be easy indeed, and His burden light. His thoughts and commandments were sweet to my soul, sweeter even than honey to my tongue. It was my comfort all the day long to praise my Lord, and to walk in the ways which He set before me. He created me unto good works, and I cheerfully walked in them."

The love of God being thus shed abroad in his heart enabled him rightly to love his brother also. His soul was drawn out in good-will and tender affection to every creature; neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies. "I could," says he, "unfeignedly love them that hated me, and pray for them that despitefully used and persecuted me!" thus truly evidencing himself to be a child of his Father in heaven.

But he did not stop here. His soul thirsted more and more for the image of God, all "the mind that was in Christ Jesus." He followed after, and longed for, an entire renovation; for nearer and stronger union and communion with the Lord Jesus: nor

could he be at all easy, otherwise than in a free and near access to Him, and a sweet enjoyment of His gracious presence. His one constant cry was, "Make me holy. Fulfil in me all the good pleasure of Thy goodness, and the work of faith with power." For this he struggled, and pleaded much with God. He truly agonized to enter in, often saying, in effect,—

"With me I know, I feel Thou art;
But this cannot suffice,
Unless Thou plantest in my heart
A constant paradise.

"My flutt'ring spirit fatigues my breast,
And swells, and spreads abroad,
And pants for everlasting rest,
And struggles into God."

This was early his mark, and the glorious prize at which he aimed throughout the residue of his Christian race.

His enjoyments were hitherto with scarcely the smallest alloy, having had not so much as a doubt concerning the reality of what had passed in his soul. The fury of the oppressor was so restrained, and the light of Divine truth so abode with him, that he continually set to his seal that "God is love," and taketh pleasure in the prosperity of His children. All fear of death and hell was removed from him; neither had sin any dominion over him. "God," says he, "gave me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, whose righteousness was imputed to me, for the remission of my sins !

"Therefore did I know that I was a child of God, 'under grace,' because sin did not reign in my mortal body, that I should obey it in the desires thereof.

(Rom. vi. 12.) If so much as an evil thought was at any time injected, or the remains of the 'old man' began to stir in me, I had immediate power to resist and overcome them.

"Tempted, indeed, I was; but in every temptation there was a way made for my escape. Whenever the enemy came in upon me as a flood, Jesus appointed 'salvation for walls and bulwarks' around me. He lifted up a standard against him, and frustrated all his counsels; for 'greater is He that was in' me, 'than he that is in the world.'

"I may say, in few words, that the kingdom of God was 'within me.' I fed upon marrow and fatness, and with comfort drew water out of the wells of salvation. Sin, and temptation, and pain, fled before the Lord Jesus, who 'dwelt in my heart by faith.' I 'walked' and talked 'with God' all the day long. Whatsoever I believed to be His will, I did to the uttermost of my power, with my whole heart. Prayer, reading, fasting, watching, communicating, and Christian fellowship, were the joy of my soul. The commandments of God, and His holy laws, were my delight. I not only rejoiced evermore, but prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks; whether I ate, or drank, or whatever I did, it was indeed 'in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to the glory of God!'"

And now, O God, who can enumerate all Thy mercies? who, those which he hath experienced in himself alone? Jesus, Thou faithful and true witness, in whom all the promises are "Yea, and Amen, to the glory of God" the Father, who can ascribe worthy praise to Thee, for Thy wonder-working love towards the children of men? How truly dost thou bruise the serpent's head, raising

Thy redeemed from the chambers of death and misery,
to the enjoyments of paradise and glory! Sing, O
ye heavens; and shout, all ye lower parts of the
earth; for this is our God, that changeth not. Still
let thine arrows be sharp in the hearts of thine
enemies; till, crying unto Thee for mercy,—

“ They fall before Thy Cross subdued,
And feel Thine arrows dipp’d in blood: ”

that, experiencing the virtue of Thine all-powerful,
all-cleansing blood, washing us whiter than snow,
we may live only to testify our gratitude to Thee,
Thou crucified Lover of human souls, who savest to
the uttermost all that come to God by Thee!

The following beautiful lines, with which I profess
I am always delighted, are so expressively applicable
to him, in this part of his experience, that I must
not deprive the reader the pleasure of them :—

“ How happy are they
Who the Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasure above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

“ That comfort was mine,
When the favour Divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb;
When my heart it believed,
What a joy it received,
What a heaven in Jesus’s name!

“ Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song;
O that all His salvation may see!
He hath loved me, I cried,
He hath suffer’d and died
To redeem such a rebel as me.

"I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet.

"O the rapturous height
Of that holy delight
Which I felt in the life-giving blood!
Of my Saviour possess'd,
I was perfectly bless'd,
As if fill'd with the fulness of God."

CHAPTER X.

His Employment amongst his Christian Brethren, and the Treatment he met with from the World.

THE treasure of light and love which God had put into the soul of His servant began now to shine clearly to others. They could easily discern an amazing change in his very aspect, as well as tempers and conduct in general. The calm, and at the same time divine, cheerfulness and serenity of his soul rendered him a desirable, as well as useful, member of their religious meetings. And the loving zeal which he felt for promoting the glory of his dying God prompted him to exert himself with much fervour in the service of his neighbour.

Thus, with a heart set on fire to pay, at least, some small returns for all that ocean of mercy and love which he had experienced in himself, he sought opportunities, and embraced every occasion, of imparting all the good which he possibly could to others; till it seemed good to those who directed

their religious exercises to appoint him leader of a class (so called): that is, a little company of Christian friends, mutually agreed to meet together weekly in order to their furtherance in the way of godliness; one person of which was styled "leader."*

This was the little office assigned him at present, in which "my business," says he, "was, 1. To see each person in my class once a week; and if any were absent, to inquire into the cause. 2. Whenever we met together, to sing psalms or hymns, and to pray with them. 3. To examine how their souls prospered, and what progress they had made the preceding week in the way of the Lord." Whether they were unanimously determined to serve God with their whole heart? If any had fallen into sin, they were reprov'd; if tempted, they were comforted and encouraged; and those who ran well, adorning their profession in all things, were exhorted still to press forward, and give glory to God.

After a faithful and friendly examination of each other, (between which and the Popish auricular confession, with which some have erroneously or unkindly paralleled it, there is scarcely the most distant resemblance,) they concluded with praising God, and prayers suited to their several conditions.

But, besides this, he met with the whole society two or three times a week, when, with praises and prayers, there was always a word of exhortation preached or read. And it pleased God to testify His approbation thereof, by the singular display of His presence amongst them; by replenishing their

* Those who would be fully informed of the rise, nature, and design of those classes, and concerning the people called Methodists in general, may, perhaps, receive satisfaction from the "Plain Account" of them, mentioned in the Catalogue of their books.

souls with abundance of His grace and heavenly benediction.

And, "O," adds he, "how wonderfully did we experience the power and love of God, whenever we made prayer and supplication to Him! We had a heaven amongst us; a paradise within us! The Lord poured such peace and joy into our hearts, and we were often so happy, that we did not know how to part. We lived as brethren, and strove together for 'the hope of the Gospel.' We were of one heart, and of one mind, in the presence of God. And is not this the communion of saints?"

"So dear the tie, where souls agree
In Jesu's dying love;
Then only can it closer be,
When all are join'd above!"

Meantime, his hitherto (since he was justified) undisturbed repose began to be sorely assaulted. His relations now took a second alarm. "They thought," says he, "that I was turned heretic altogether." To forsake the Church of Rome, and declare himself a member of the Church of England, was bad enough, and with them matter of much displeasure; but to become a Methodist beside!*

* In reality, this is no alteration of the case: it is in this respect no more than a name; a true Methodist (for "they are not all Israel who are called Israel") being no other than a true Churchman. They make not so much as a pretence to be a distinct, independent body of people. They are properly a Religious Society, (not a new thing in England,) consisting, for the most part, of professed members of the Church of England; whose only design is to promote amongst each other, and mankind in general, the genuine religion of Jesus Christ; and may therefore be properly considered as a seasonable assistant in an age not the most religious, and as a faithful servant to Protestant churches in general

This they judged the very consummation of apostasy, and gave him up as undone for ever. And it was not only his kindred who so judged of him: "But," adds he, "my neighbours in general were like-minded with my relations; and not those only of the Church of Rome, but several likewise who called themselves Protestants. They were extremely angry that I should, as they called it, 'change my religion.'

"And now did I see plainly, that persons of every denomination, who are yet in their sins, under the guilt and power of them, are at enmity against Christ; and that Protestants, as well as Papists, have naturally a spirit of calumny and persecution." Alas! names and opinions, what are they? They do not, cannot, alter the nature of men or things; and experience abundantly shows how little influence they have over the tempers and life of the generality of mankind. "Reformed and unreformed," adds he, "I found to be just alike; and that many who spoke against the Pope and Inquisition were themselves in reality of the same spirit.

"When I was first converted, I had no notion that people could hate and speak evil of me for fearing God, and working righteousness.* But experience has taught me otherwise. I soon found the truth of the apostle's words, that 'all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' (2 Tim. iii. 12.) Relations, and acquaintance, and neighbours, rich and poor, old and young, clergy and laity, were all against me. Some said I was an hypocrite; others, that I was mad; others, judging

* This is not indeed the avowed reason of the opposition which the world has in all ages made to the servants of Christ. But that it is the true one, the Scriptures abundantly testify.

more favourably, that I was deceived. Many that before thought well, yea, highly of me, knew not how to harbour a good thought of me."

But when God speaks powerfully to the heart, the sentiments and words of men, be they never so flattering, censorious, or threatening, make but little impression. He was, therefore, so far from being moved by this treatment, that it became to him rather a confirmation of the doctrine of the Son of God, who says expressly, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you; and blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely, for My name's sake."

Of a truth "the world lieth in the wicked one." And they who are after the flesh will hate and persecute them that are after the Spirit. The devil hates Christ and His children. It is the Spirit of Christ in His children which that evil spirit in the "children of disobedience" so violently opposes. The spirit of the world "lusteth to envy." The devil envied Adam; so did Cain his brother Abel: and as it has been of old time, so is it at this day. "Light can have no communion with darkness, neither Christ with Belial." In this respect "there is nothing new under the sun;" but "that which hath been is the thing that is." The true worshippers of God, under the Old Testament, and the sincere disciples of Christ, under the New, have been evil treated by those among whom they lived. (See Acts iv. 3, 18, 29; Heb. xi.; 1 John iii. 12, 13.) They hated them, because their works were righteous. And so it is even now.*

* The opposition he met with, partly from those of his own household, and partly from many others of different denominations,

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CHAPTER XI.

His Providential Appointment to labour for the Good of his Neighbour, by preaching the Gospel.

HE had, from his first thorough awakening, a love to, and concern for, the souls of others, which was quite new to him. The same cause which made him so solicitous for his own salvation could hardly fail of producing in him a tender sympathy for the souls of his neighbours; that is, every one: and the painful apprehensions which he had of his own danger impelled him to warn others also, whom he judged to be in like circumstances. The hand of God was, no doubt, in this, as well as in the whole series of his preceding conversion. His unsearchable and adorable wisdom had appointed him, as the event plainly declared, to become an instrument of saving souls from endless misery; having first prepared him for it, without his knowledge of any such design, by the hell and heaven, so to speak, of his own experience.

Even before he had obtained mercy he began to warn others; exhorting all with whom he had any sort of intercourse to "flee from the wrath to come."

together with that which he saw was made to the people called Methodists in general, then in Ireland, (their preaching-houses burned, goods rifled, persons persecuted, and even Scriptures profaned, by ballads in one hand, and the Bible in the other, singing profanely through the streets among the baser sort of people; prompted thereto even by dignified persons,) gave occasion to these observations. But what inexpressible reason have the inhabitants of these nations to bless God that those kinds of outrages are not authorized; and that our Government has so effectually provided against injuring the innocent of every denomination!

"Thus," as he observes, "while I was in unbelief myself, I sometimes forgot my own condition, through eagerness of desire for the salvation of other souls."

Meantime, it was frequently impressed upon his mind, "You must preach the Gospel. Thou shalt bear public testimony to the truth of God,"* by openly declaring His lovingkindness in the redemption of the world. But he often resisted the thought; urging the impossibility thereof, from a variety of considerations; and saying, in effect, "Send by whom Thou wilt send; but send not me."

"Yes, well Thou know'st I did not seek,
Uncall'd of God, for God to speak;
The dreadful charge I sought to flee,
'Send whom Thou wilt, but send not me.'"

Indeed, though he might have never so much desired it, in submission to the will of God, nevertheless, when the thought first presented itself to him, being a conscious unbeliever, he might have justly said, and it was the language of his heart,—

"How shall I teach the world to love,
Unchanged my heart, unloosed my tongue?
Give me the power of faith to prove,
And Jesus shall be all my song."

It is, indeed, a poor case, when ministers, preaching the Gospel, repentance, and remission of sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, cannot experimentally say of themselves, "We are witnesses of these things."

* Is this kind of impulse, or anything resembling it, what our Church means in her solemn Form of Ordination, by that weighty question (O that it were duly attended to!) to all her candidates for holy orders?—"Do you trust you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take this office upon you?"

“Heralds of grace would you commence ?
Of this, first, self-experienced be :
First, through those wounds you would dispense,
Yourself be reconciled and free :
When pard’ning love and grace you find,
Then publish them to all mankind.”

Influenced by these kinds of considerations, he could not, while he remained himself under the bondage of unbelief, think of publishing peace and liberty to others. But the case was, in some degree, altered, after he had tasted that the Lord is gracious. He was then drawn out more abundantly with love to souls, and his conviction became still stronger, that he must preach Christ Jesus to the people.

This put him upon earnest prayer, and frequent fastings, to know, assuredly, the will of God in a matter which he rightly judged of so great a moment. “I prostrated myself before the Lord,” says he, “and entreated Him to show me His pleasure herein ; to convince me by His Holy Spirit, whether the thoughts of my heart were according to His holy will, and whether I ought to speak in His name ; or, if I was under a delusion, to show me this also, and deliver me from it. I could appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that I desired only to glorify Him, and do His will in all things.” He conducted himself in it with all possible secrecy ; being even then persuaded, that the affairs of God are to be carried on without noise, and that no ostentation should be used, even in forsaking all to serve Christ, in this or any other way. And yet, to see him employed always for God, spending his time only in reading, writing, exhorting others, and in profound meditation, it was easy to imagine that he either projected something for God’s glory, more than

could be executed by him in private; or, at least, that whether he had any such design or not, God meant it concerning him.

He still kept the affair within his own breast, having mentioned it to no one person whatsoever, till, from some words he occasionally dropped one day among his brethren, one of them gathered that he had some thoughts of that kind. At length it became matter of much and earnest prayer among the most serious of his Christian acquaintance, with whom, afterwards, he held frequent conversations on the head; being fearful of taking one step in a matter of so great importance, without the clearest intimations of the Divine good pleasure.

He had a weighty sense of the greatness and awfulness of the work, and wanted not his discouragements from many a quarter, such as, had he conferred only with "flesh and blood," consulted his own ease and secular advantages, would have entirely deterred him from ever attempting a labour exposing him to so many difficulties and temptations. His want of academical education, honour, and dignities, (the only recommendatory ministerial qualifications to the greater part of mankind,) he knew would expose him to the censure of many; and he well knew, that to engage in the endeavour of saving souls from death, was to commence war with Satan, and all the sons of disobedience: nevertheless, being fully persuaded of the will of God, and not knowing how soon he might be in another world, the great concernment of miserable souls prevailed with him, at length, to engage in it; concluding that if but one or two persons might by his means be won to God, it would easily recompense any treatment he might meet with in the world. He was fully dis-

posed to sacrifice his reputation, as well as life, to advance the kingdom of the Son of God.

He judged that the knowledge of languages, and other branches of human literature, are highly expedient, and in some cases necessary; but that, however, they are not absolutely so, in order to qualify a man for preaching the Gospel with success. He knew that he might understand "sound doctrine," and "hold fast a form of sound speech," without the knowledge of either Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. He, nevertheless, at no time spoke disrespectfully of learning: quite the contrary; but yet he perceived, with adoration and amazement, the signification of St. Paul's words, with reference to the Divine economy in the management of the affairs of His kingdom: "After that in the wisdom of God," according to His wise disposals, leaving them to make the trial, "the world," whether Jewish or Gentile, by all their boasted "wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.)

He well knew by this time, that it is "the inspiration of the Almighty" that giveth heavenly understanding, which only avails here; that the most shining abilities, natural or acquired, without "the wisdom that is from above," and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, are, in the account of God, in respect of "bringing sons to glory," lighter than vanity; nor better than "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." In fact, that the learning of this world, used otherwise than in subservience to the true interests of Jesus Christ in teaching and vindicating simplicity and purity of heart, and subjection in life to Him, rather feeds the pride of human understanding, and makes a person more like Satan

than he would be without it ; but that, rightly used, it is a good gift of God, and greatly conducive to His glory.

Indeed, from his earliest days, it cannot be learned that he neglected any means that were in his power, for the cultivating his understanding. But he now set himself to this point ; impelled as it were thereto, from his still being more abundantly pressed in spirit concerning the matter which he had so long in debate with himself, but which was now every day more plain to him. He therefore applied with all diligence to what he judged the most suitable studies ; in which he spent the greatest part of his waking hours. The "word of life" had, however, the chief share of his attention. He made this his one favourite study and delight, from this time especially, till he could work no longer. In truth,

" Above his years
The law of God he read, and found it sweet ;
Made it his whole delight, and in it grew
To great perfection." MILTON.

He read it much upon his knees, in the spirit of prayer. The following is a specimen only of his continued practice :—" Lord Jesus, I lay my soul at Thy feet, to be taught and governed by Thee. Take the veil from the mystery, and show me the truth as it is in Thyself. Be Thou my sun and star, by day and by night !" This was the way in which he sought for wisdom to win souls, and by which his profiting so visibly appeared to all men.

His increasing knowledge in the things of God was an additional confirmation to him of the Divine appointment concerning him. The hidden treasures and depth of truth in God's word,—His mysterious

wisdom in the methods of salvation,—were every day more and more clearly revealed to him. The sealed book was now opened ; and thereby, through the assistance of the “ Spirit of truth,” his judgment grew clearer and stronger, in the fundamental doctrines of repentance, justification, and holiness. He professes that, if at any time he was in doubt concerning any point of doctrine, or the sense of any passage of Scripture, his Divine Instructor convinced him, that either it was not needful for him to know it then ; or, if it was, directed him, either immediately by Himself, through some Divine impression, or the providential provision of some person or book, whereby his doubts were always solved.

The concern which he felt for the salvation of his neighbour still increased upon him, and a burning desire that everybody might be as happy in the Lord Jesus as he felt himself, engrossed all his thoughts, and employed them about the most probable means of effecting his desire. “ The Spirit of God,” says he, “ now convinced me clearly, not only of sin and of righteousness in my own soul, but, likewise, how the work of conversion is to be carried on in the souls of others. I was athirst for Divine knowledge. I desired to be ever in the school of Christ, learning the lessons of His grace. The glory of the Lord often passed before me in prayer, and the light of eternity shone upon my soul, while my Lord fed me as with marrow and fatness !”

CHAPTER XII.

He begins to preach.

WHAT he had done hitherto with reference to the conversion of souls was only as occasions offered themselves, and necessity obliged him to ; the peace and perfection of his own soul being his main object of concern, till Providence, having designed him for evangelical use in the ministry of the Gospel, put him upon other and more extensive measures for promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

He began to consider more nearly, that souls having cost our Saviour so dear, nothing could be done more acceptable to Him than to prevent their loss ; and that the glory of God's majesty did most shine in the salvation of sinners purchased with the blood of His Son. These and such like considerations kindled in him such love to all mankind, that he could no longer refrain from exhorting, first, his Christian brethren, with all fervour, to devote their hearts without reserve to God ; and so, indeed, every soul with whom he had any sort of intercourse. His heart bled for poor careless sinners against God and their own souls. The word of the Lord was in him, so that he could not but speak. He knew not how to forbear publishing, as on the housetop, that infinite love which dealt so graciously with himself. "It is not enough," (as his conduct spoke,) "that I serve our Lord : all hearts must love Him, and all tongues must praise Him."

God touched his heart in such a manner as to leave no doubt whether this appointment of him was from heaven ; and the concurrence of outward provi-

dences so confirmed his internal persuasion, that he could not, without manifest disobedience, refuse to comply. Thus, freed from all farther wavering and irresolution within himself, he became settled and confirmed in entering upon that employment, (though exempt from ease and honour, exposed to contempt, and irksome to flesh and blood, however,) which he verily believed he should wish he had done at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, when an account must be rendered to God of all human words and actions.

Desirous, therefore, of a more enlarged sphere to exercise his Lord's talent, and the period of time affording a providential provision for it, even out of the ordinary way, he took the opportunity of his present connexions, and, without looking farther, pursued the following measures. "I opened," says he, "my mind to that man of God, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. I spoke my thoughts freely, and without disguise, desiring his advice on the occasion; which he sweetly and humbly gave me: adding, withal, that I might write to him afterwards. I did so, giving him a brief account of my conversion to God, and of what I experienced in my soul concerning preaching. His answer was as follows:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“It is hard to judge what God has called you to, till trial is made. Therefore, when you have an opportunity, you may go to Shronil, and spend two or three days with the people there. Speak to them in Irish.’”

Shronil is a village in the county of Tipperary, distant from the place he then resided at (New-

Market) about thirty English miles. The inhabitants, many of whom were Protestant Dissenters, had some time before gladly received the word of God from the Methodists. Thither he went, accompanied by one of his own brothers, and another of his Christian brethren; having been commended to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ by the earnest prayers of several of the children of God. "We walked it," says he, "and gave ourselves to prayer, conversing of the things of the kingdom of heaven, and exhorting those we met with in the way to fear the Lord, and depart from evil."

They arrived there the next day, which was in July, 1750. The brethren received them kindly in the Lord, though they were unknown to them by face. And having had knowledge of his errand, and informed their neighbours, there were assembled in the evening, in a large barn, a considerable congregation, to whom, for the first time, he preached the word of God, choosing for his first text the words of St. Paul: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 28.)

He did so again the next morning, on, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) And, in like manner, morning and evening, during the few days he stayed among them.

And the Lord bore testimony to the word of His grace. For although some (as has always been the case*) contradicted and mocked, yet others were

* "Some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people." Some believed, and some contradicted and blasphemed. So it was in the days of our Lord, and of His apostles; and will it not be so to the end of the world?

deeply affected, and some were "turned to the Lord." "So gracious was God," adds he, "to own the labours of His poor creature, and to bless the word of His weakest and meanest messenger. Not unto me, but unto Thy name, be the glory! O God, Thou hast done the work. Thou didst give the word, and didst also apply it; for Thou only canst turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. O my God, stand by me still! and as hitherto Thou hast helped me, never leave nor forsake me. But keep my soul in peace, and give me an humble and a meek spirit. Let me labour diligently in Thy vineyard, and spend my life and strength in the labour of love. Amen, Lord Jesus."

Thus we have brought to a conclusion what was proposed in this First Part; having seen him from his youth, through the various stages of the travail of his soul, the whole process of his conversion, till, his heart being set at liberty by the Son of God, he began to run the ways of His commandments with great joy, and to publish the "voice of wisdom" to all around him. It remains to give some account of his labours, various trials, and success in the Lord's work, together with the general tenor of his life and experience, till God was pleased to call him hence.

PART II.

“NOT more remote from sorrow, than from Him
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
So much of Deity on guilty dust.”

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

Of his entire Application to preaching the Gospel.

It being now no longer matter of doubt what the will of God was concerning him,—trial having been made, and the fruit answering to the design,—he resolved to defer no longer stirring up the gift of God which was in him. Setting aside, therefore, every other concern and employment, he devoted himself entirely to the work which he believed God had assigned him. He set out with a resolution to give himself up wholly to the dictates of the Holy Ghost, and to be ready to go what way soever the voice of heaven should call him. And that his understanding might not be dissipated, and scattered upon divers objects, and so have less force to enter deep into the things of God, he began his work with applying himself altogether to the study of the holy Scriptures, and to prayer. And the proficiency which, by those means, he made daily in “the wisdom that is from above” quickly appeared. He truly laboured in the word, and faithfully and fervently enforced the Divine truths he learned therefrom. His soul

became strangely enlarged in labours of love for the salvation of his neighbours; while he imparted to them abundantly what God had so richly and so freely bestowed upon him.

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ were, in general, exceeding precious to him; and, from his first acquaintance with them, his whole delight and his counsellors. The whole of his following conduct, to his death, seemed influenced by those words of Christ, (applicable to all real Christians,) "Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world. A city set upon a hill cannot be hid: neither do men" (much less God) "light a candle, to put it under a bushel," (that is, hide it,) "but on a candlestick," (Matt. v. 13-16,) that it may give light to all about it. And St. Peter, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter iv. 10.)

And now, the Divine providence, concurring with his convictions and inclination, made his way clear to put into execution what he had been so long deliberating upon. Conferring, therefore, no longer with flesh and blood, and resolving to deny himself, and take up his cross to follow Jesus, he bade farewell to his kindred, and to his acquaintance in general. Choosing the Lord for his sole portion, he literally left all,* and went out into the world,

* Whoever considers the instance mentioned Mark xii. 41-44—the estimate which the Judge of all passes upon the most specious outward actions—will easily perceive, that it is not the greatness of a work, or the quantity and value, in human estimation, of what any one forsakes for Him, which God regards; but rather the spirit and principle whence an action, great or small, proceeds. "Many that were rich cast in much. And a certain poor widow threw in two

entirely unanxious about what he should eat, or what he should drink, or wherewithal he should be clothed, being fully persuaded that an entire reliance on God was all things. He went to spend his life in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God. Thus,—

“By Christ Himself ordain’d and sent,
A herald of redeeming grace,
Eager to the highways he went,
And fill’d the land with Jesu’s praise.”

This was about the latter end of August, 1750, when, going from the place of his nativity to Limerick, he had daily opportunity of publishing those glad tidings which he first heard in that city, and which became the power of God to his salvation. At first, he commonly expounded the Scriptures every morning; and after a little while, both evening and morning, with much earnestness, exhorted and besought multitudes, who attended his discourses, to “seek the Lord while He may be found.”

And it pleased God immediately to bear testimony to “the word of His grace” by him. Several persons who heard him, and who, till then, had been careless and utterly unconcerned about the matter, became seriously concerned for their salvation; while in the mean time others, who had been deeply distressed with the guilt of sin and fear of punishment, felt His word both

“Heal and exhilarate their broken hearts,
Though plunged before in horror’s deepest night.”

He was about this time called to bear reproach for mites, which make a farthing. And Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they who have cast into the treasury.”

his work's sake. The minds of some persons became evil affected towards him. The interests of "the god of this world" had already suffered loss by his zeal and unwearied diligence in promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and they were in danger of suffering yet more. Satan therefore mustered up his wiles, (which God permitted for wise ends,) and by every means endeavoured to prevent as much as possible the fruit of his labours.

His unpolished youth; his roughness, both of address and dialect, owing partly to natural temper, partly to having been brought up much in the country, (like, to compare little things with great, another preacher of repentance coming out of the wilderness,) and partly to his having been formerly of the Church of Rome;* but more than all, his being a native of that neighbourhood, gave some persons a pretended fair occasion for being deeply offended at him, who expressed it by their unkind and uncivil treatment towards him.† This I had

* There is in some parts of Ireland a very remarkable difference between the dialect of the Protestants and Romanists, even of the same county or parish. What is called the brogue, in its excess, is a sort of Shibboleth for the latter; and, among the younger sort of Protestants especially, a term of reproach. I remember it was a very common objection to him, when he preached first in the town of my nativity.

† "It generally holds, that a teacher sent from God is not so acceptable to his neighbours as to strangers. They cannot suffer that he, who was before equal with or below themselves, should now bear a superior character."—"The reason of man cannot comprehend how God should abase Himself for his sake. His pride will not own and receive the wisdom of God, unless it be accompanied with His greatness and glory. In short, a preacher of the Gospel ought to be as a Melchizedek, of whom we know nothing, but only that he is a servant of Christ, who preaches His truth, and is the first to put it in practice."

from some of the persons themselves, a considerable time after, who mentioned it to their own reproach, that he, whom then they so loved and honoured, was nevertheless once the object of their contempt and scorn.

But as he sought not his own things, neither strove to please man, having in view only the glory of God and the good of souls, this did not in the least damp his fervour or retard his progress. As he saw daily the fruit of his labours, so he was not to be hindered or discouraged by any treatment of himself: rather he rejoiced in contempt for his Master's sake, and could feelingly say of it,

“ Now, since with Thee my lot is cast,
I bless my God's decree;
Embrace with joy what He embraced,
And live and die with Thee.

“ Through Thee we tread the shining way
Which saints and martyrs trod;
Shake off the frailty of our clay,
And wing our way to God.

“ Present to end the doubtful strife,
Thine aid we timely feel;
Confirm'd by Thee, though warm in life,
Bid the vain world farewell.”

He had “ put his hand to the plough,” (Luke ix. 62,) and, having counted the cost, settled it in his heart not to look back. He waxed still stronger, and grew every day more mighty in the Scriptures, and in conformity to our Lord, as well as more instrumental in bringing others acquainted with “ the only true God,” and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

There are many instances of the good effects of these his first labours. It plainly appeared that the

word of God in his mouth was attended with the power of the Holy Ghost. It was not an uncommon case for persons to be so penetrated by his awakening and fervent discourses, as even to resolve not to leave the place till they should find rest to their heavy-laden souls. And the instances were not a few to whom the God of love condescended even in this particular by sending them "the Spirit of adoption into their hearts," testifying, "Thy sins are forgiven;" and enabling them to cry, "Abba, Father."

His time was now wholly taken up in searching, expounding, and enforcing the Scriptures, which he did both in public and in private; in prayer, visiting the sick, and whatsoever other particular employments, occasional or stated, had any relation to his one purpose of spending, and being spent, in the service of his only Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And having been thus employed at Limerick for some time, his inclination led him, and it was judged expedient, that he should go and preach the Gospel in other places also.

CHAPTER II.

He goes into the Provinces of Leinster and Connaught, and preaches the Word there.

HIS way into those parts had, in some degree, been prepared before him; many having received that Gospel which he preached from others of his brethren. He followed them, flaming with desire for the salvation of souls, and with zeal for the glory

of his Master. And God, who is pleased, by seemingly disproportionate causes, to produce the greatest effects, did, by means of this stripling, cause to be called to remembrance the sins of many stout-hearted Goliaths, whom at length the Gospel reduced to "the obedience of Christ."

His labours now were greater than any he had hitherto known ; for, beside preaching always twice, (unless when sickness prevented,) and sometimes thrice a day, he often travelled many miles between. But it was rendered pleasant to him, doing it heartily as to the Lord. Where love is, there is no labour ; and if there be labour, the labour is loved : yes, it carries a burden without a burden. For a while all his attempts succeeded, and his endeavours were crowned with much success. Multitudes of people, of all denominations, attended his preaching in the towns and villages wherever he came ; so that in a little time he was generally known all around the country.

Now, therefore, did the god of this world so stir up his emissaries, that no less than the taking away his life was designed. He has been sometimes way-laid in his journey, and escaped their hands only by remarkable interpositions of Divine providence. It may perhaps be tedious to enumerate all the instances. The following I set down, abridged from his journal :—

"Thursday, Jan. 4th, 1750.—With much weakness of body I preached this morning, and soon after set out for Roscrea. About a mile from the town I met a large company, armed with clubs. Seventy-eight men were sworn upon the occasion. At the first sight of them I was a little daunted ; but I prayed to the Lord for direction, and was strength-

ened. They compelled me to alight, saying, 'they would bring a minister of the Church of England, and a Romish priest, to talk with me.' I let them know I contended with no man concerning opinions, nor preached against any particular Church, but against sin and wickedness in all. I said, 'Supposing three persons among you, of different denominations, it may be a Churchman, a Quaker, and a Papist, sitting down and drinking to excess, begin to dispute, each affirming that his was the best religion: where is the religion of all these men? Surely they are without any, unless it be that of Belial. They are of their father the devil, while his works they do. And if they live and die in this condition, hell must be their eternal portion.' This they could not gainsay.

"After some further discourse on the design of my coming to preach the Gospel to them, and appealing to themselves concerning the necessity of it, their rage seemed a little abated, and they told me they would let me go, on condition that I would swear never more to come to Roscrea. But when I resolutely refused this, they consulted on rougher measures, and, after much debate, were determined to put me into a well, which they had prepared for that purpose. They hurried me away into the town, where I was surrounded, as by so many human wolves. They held a consultation again, and resolved either to make me swear that I would never more come thither, or else to put me into the well. But I refused either to swear or promise. Some then cried vehemently that I should go into the water; but others contradicted, and as positively said I should not.

"After some time the parish minister came, who

behaved well, and desired that I might be set at liberty. They consented, provided I would go out of town immediately. From an inn, where they confined me, they brought me out into the street, and, it being market-day, I began to preach to the people. But, taking me by the back, they hurled me before them out of town. At length I got on horseback, and, taking off my hat, I prayed for them some considerable time. I then called upon them in the name of God, for Christ's sake, to repent: and told them, as to myself, in the cause of God, I feared neither devils nor men; that to do their souls good was my sole motive of coming among them; and that, if God permitted, they might put me in the well, or even stone me; that, be it how it would, I was content.

“I came off from them, at length, in peace of conscience and serenity of mind. From the first of it to the last, I was not the least disturbed, nor stirred in anger or malice towards them. O God, it is Thou alone that hast wrought this deliverance for me, in restraining the malice of men and devils, not suffering them to hurt me, when they rose up against me. Therefore, with angels and archangels, I laud and magnify Thy holy name; Thy tender mercy and paternal affection towards me, O holy Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

His labours in that place were not, however, in vain: there appeared some fruit to the glory of God. He had been there, both before this opposition, and likewise afterwards; by which means, through the blessing of Heaven upon his endeavours, there were gathered together a few who departed from evil, bringing forth the fruits of repentance, and who met frequently together, to strengthen each other's hands in God.

He abode in those parts for some months, and went through much, both evil and good report. While going about daily, he endeavoured, by all means, the conversion of their souls. He often wanted proper necessaries for his body, now every day impaired in its health, through the greatness of his fatigues. But this by no means damped the fervour of his spirit, and concern which he felt for perishing sinners, great numbers of whom were present to his view wherever he came. A desire of being instrumental towards opening their eyes, and turning them to God, brought him amongst them; nor could any personal inconvenience, respecting himself, alter his purpose, till Providence directed his way elsewhere.

CHAPTER III.

Some farther Account of the Troubles he met with on account of preaching the Gospel.

OUR Saviour, on a certain occasion, said of His kingdom, "If it were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered into the hands of the Jews." Satan, on the contrary, is said to be a "prince," and "the god of this world." And, alas, how numerous are his poor vassals! When, therefore, his servants perceive their master's kingdom in danger, they do fight, lest it should be subjected to its rightful Lord.

And this seems to be the true reason of all that opposition which the Gospel of Christ has met with, almost ever since its first establishment. That this did not cease with the heathen persecutions, church history abundantly testifies; as does, in reality, the

experience of every child of God. As it was of old time, so it has been ever since: "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." "He that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey." And "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," more or less, of one kind or other, (Gal. iv. 29; Isai. lix. 15; 2 Tim. iii. 12,) from every son of disobedience; whose ruler, "the prince of the power of the air," is, always has been, and ever will be, an enemy to the "Seed of the woman," and the propagation of His kingdom. Christ expressly says of His real disciples, "Ye are not of this world: if ye were, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of this world," (your maxims, tempers, and actions are quite opposite to theirs,) "therefore the world hateth you." And again, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." And hence that caution of the beloved disciple, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Whosoever endeavours to live so as Jesus did must of necessity be treated as He was.

And hence only can be accounted for that frequent opposition which this servant of Christ, burning with desire to promote and see the kingdom of God come with power, met with from those of a contrary spirit, amongst most denominations of Christians, so called, wherever he came. Some, it is true, in almost every place, received the word gladly; while others not only did not regard it, but treated him with unkindness, if not roughly handled him, even to abusive language, blows, or imprisonment.

The following instance, which was the occasion of my first knowledge of him, happened in the town of my nativity, in the county, and about twenty miles from the city, of Cork:—

At the repeated request of some of the inhabitants, he went thither, accompanied by a few friends from the town of Bandon, June 11th, 1752. The magistrate, who was also rector of the parish, the Rev. Mr. William Ellis, was applied to for the use of the market-house to preach in ; which after he had with displeasure refused, it was proposed that he should preach at a small distance from the town. Thither he went, accompanied by multitudes, to whom, under the canopy of the outspread firmament near a spacious strand, and shaded by a spreading tree, he fully and affectionately declared the Gospel of the grace of God.

By the time he had got to the place appointed, the magistrate had sent his sergeants to forbid him preaching. "But being," to use his own words, "of the opinion that, on this occasion, it was better to obey God rather than man," he stepped up upon a table, prepared for that purpose, and, immediately opening his little Bible, read to them Job xxi. 3: "Suffer me, that I may speak: after that, mock on." The seasonable singularity of the very text so excited their (the sergeants') attention, that they permitted him to finish quietly, themselves attending all the while.

From this passage he took occasion to preach "Jesus and Him crucified," and endeavoured to set Him forth evidently as crucified before our eyes. The word was, in truth, with power. Several faces were turned to paleness, and wet with tears, while he urged it home upon the conscience, that our sins were the cause of His death, the betrayers and murderers of the Son of God. And, alas! how true!

"Yes, charged with all our guilt, He stood,
Sinners from suffering to redeem;

For us He pour'd out all His blood,
He pour'd it out to cleanse from sin.

"For, O ! devoid of sin, and free
From actual or entail'd offence,
No sinner in Himself was He,
But pure and perfect innocence.

"Surely for us He humbled was,
And grieved with sorrows not His own;
Of all His woes we were the cause,
We fill'd His soul with pangs unknown.

"Yes, Lord, with our transgressions stain'd,
For my offence Thou wounded wast;
Mine were the sins that bruised and pain'd,
And scourged and nail'd Thee to the cross."

On his return into the town, he was seized by the officers, and brought before the magistrate, followed by an astonished multitude. Being asked many and various questions concerning "this way," he answered fully, and without fear. The conversation lasted near an hour, in which he largely explained himself, giving the reasons of his conduct; and alleging, in its behalf, precedents both from Scripture and antiquity.

But Mr. Ellis, having pre-determined what he would do, was not to be moved by arguments. He therefore let him know, that unless he would promise to preach no more in this way, at least not in those parts, he should be committed to prison without delay. He replied, that "as he had been so earnestly importuned to come there, he could not, in conscience, promise not to come;" and asked, "Are there no swearers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, and the like, in these parts?" Being answered, "There are;" he added, that "if, after he had preached there a few times, there appeared to be no reformation for the better amongst them, he would never come thither

more." But it seemed resolved, that all he might say should not be regarded; and he was, at length, ordered to prison. He went thither with all readiness; and esteemed it matter of thanksgiving, that his Lord counted him worthy to suffer reproach for His name's sake.

Several persons accompanied him into the prison, where, during the whole time, he, with his friends, sang praises to God, and exhorted the people. The street was crowded, some saying one thing, and some another: in general, however, they were displeased at his confinement, and almost the whole town seemed concerned in his behalf. He still, as far as his voice could reach, preached to them through the window.

The inhabitants showed the utmost civility towards him; and, not knowing how long he might be confined there, they provided bedding and provision for him and his companions. But it was not long before the magistrate sent to let him go. Coming out, and seeing such a number of people, he would fain, weak and fatigued as he was, have preached to them; but was dissuaded by his friends. He then went to a private room, and exhorted till ten o'clock, as many as came to him, which were not a few.

He went thither twice afterwards, and, though still with much contradiction, preached to them that Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation." His endeavours, however, were not all lost. There are, to this hour, some of the fruit of his labours in that place; persons to whom, because of the blessing which God made him to their souls, his memory will be for ever precious.

The following instance happened in the north of Ireland, some considerable time after the preceding,

at a place called Newtown, whither he went on the Lord's day.

At the desire of several persons, he intended to have preached in a place called the Church-green, where were assembled a large company to hear him. But while his hands were lifted up in prayer, there came one Mr. Mortimer, a Presbyterian, and with him several hundred persons, and, taking hold of him by the breast, pulled him with violence to the ground. They hauled him through the mob, and had wellnigh choked him, when one Mr. Biers freed him from the hands of him who held him ; for which he was soon struck to the ground himself.

Being got free, it grieved him exceedingly to see such a willing multitude disappointed ; and being importuned thereto by some who earnestly desired to hear the word, he went to a place at some distance from the former. But here, likewise, by the time he had begun, the same persons pursued him : perceiving, therefore, that it was vain to attempt preaching in the midst of such disturbance, he retired to a little house, in a garden at some distance. But neither here could he be at rest ; and, to avoid their fury, he was obliged to wade through wet meadows, and then climb over the mountains, till, "wet and weary, we" (he had one person with him) "came to the house of one Mr. Ambey, who supplied us with all we wanted." His tender, broken constitution could not, however, endure this fatigue without feeling its effects. He was obliged, therefore, in a few days, to take to his bed, where a fever confined him for some time.

It need not be dissembled, that the authors of this outrage towards a stranger, never there before, and chargeable with no crime, save that of endea-

vouring, disinterestedly, to save souls from death, were a company of Presbyterians: (as are a principal part of the inhabitants of the north of Ireland :) but, alas ! what are names ? “Liberty of conscience, and right of private judgment,” are indeed good and specious words. But how reconcilable they are to such conduct as this, let all the world judge. He professes, that in all his journeying and intercourse among people of most denominations, in the course of his employments for God, he had met with no such treatment ; no, not among the most enraged of the Romanists themselves.

The state of his heart, to which in all outward commotions, as well as in his own calm recesses, he constantly attended, he expresses on the present occasion thus :—“In the midst of it all, my mind was calm. I had no remarkable consolation, or fear, or sorrow : I prayed for them, and do still pray God to forgive them, and not lay this sin to their charge.”

I pass over a number of other instances of the opposition he met with, in the exercise of his calling, of a private as well as public nature ; and only mention these, as a specimen of the spirit of the world in reference to him, and of the malice which Satan bears to God’s kingdom and servants in general.

CHAPTER IV.

A short Account of the Endeavours of the Romish Clergy to prevent his Usefulness among their People. The Means he made use of to instruct them, and the Success which he met with therein.

NOTWITHSTANDING the strict laws which are in force to prevent the propagation of Popery in these kingdoms, and to restrain the attempts of Romish priests and Jesuits,* it is no secret, that both in Ireland and England their endeavours are as unwearied as ever. They compass sea and land, all round the globe, and hardly stick at anything that may contribute towards their making proselytes.

The endeavours of this servant of Christ to convert to Him members of that communion stirred up their clergy against him wherever he came. His name was well known in all their churches; and in whatsoever place there appeared but a probability of his coming, the priests took care to render him as obnoxious to the people as they possibly could; insomuch that they stuck at nothing, though never so false, to compass their end. They, however, carefully avoided his having opportunity to talk

* In the reign of King William and Queen Mary there were several Acts of Parliament made for checking the growth of Popery in Ireland: one of which made provision, that after the death of the then Popish clergy, there never should be an ecclesiastic of that religion in the nation. And these laws are yet standing in the statute-books of that kingdom. Yet it still swarms more and more with Popish priests and friars. It has been computed, that there are not less than two thousand emissaries, dependent on Rome, employed continually in England, Ireland, and Scotland.

with themselves. I do not find that from the time of his leaving their communion he had ever any settled, personal interviews with them, although, for the sake of their poor, ignorant people, for whom he had the tenderest compassion, he has frequently desired it; sometimes even in public. One occasional conversation only with one of their priests, on board a ship, in a passage from England to Dublin, he relates as follows:—"We discoursed on the following particulars: 1. Concerning the Pope's infallibility. 2. Transubstantiation. 3. Invocation of saints. 4. Purgatory. But he could not withstand the force of plain Scripture, and therefore withdrew. The company were greatly pleased to find how little the Romish clergy have to say for themselves, when opposed by arguments taken from Scripture and reason."

Whatever is the motive of endeavouring to detain in ignorance the generality of that communion,* certain it is, that fear of the contrary occasioned the constant opposition of their priests to his unwearied endeavours among them, for the informing their judgment and reformation of their life. They not only propagated a variety of lying insinuations, to prevent their people's resort to his sermons, for which multitudes of them discovered so great an inclination; but likewise forbade any of them to hear him, under pain of damnation.

In one place (C——l) the priest informed his congregation, (to such low shifts were they driven,) and industriously spread abroad, that he had been

* An order of friars in Italy were professedly called "*Fratres Ignorantiæ*,"—the ignorant brethren." They were bound by oath neither to know, learn, or understand anything at all, and answered all questions with "*Nescio*,—I know not."

servant-boy to a certain priest; and that, having stolen his master's books, he learned to preach by that means.

The conduct of another of them, at C——k, was still more extraordinary. There was in that place a vast resort of Catholics (so called) to his sermons, which were often under the open firmament, as well as daily within doors, both in Irish and English; and among the Romanists, who were happily stirred up thereby to a concern for their salvation, there was one elderly woman, who had been in some religious office among them. She entirely forsook their communion, constantly attended his sermons, and thenceforward received the Lord's supper in the Church of England.

The Romish priests became strangely irritated, and laboured vehemently to stop the growing evil; to which end, one of them affirmed to the people, that "as to that Walsh, who had some time before turned heretic, and went about preaching, he had been dead long ago; and that he who then preached in this manner was but the devil in his shape."

But their endeavours proved, in great measure, ineffectual; for however a few persons, who cared but little about the matter, might have received ill impressions from such malicious or mistaken insinuations, yet several of their communion, in many places, heard him gladly, and would not be hindered therefrom. Rather, the more the priests urged them, they prevailed the less. His labours, and prayers, and tears, for their poor straying souls, over whom his bowels so often yearned, had on many the desired effect; being thereby not only reformed from Popery, but really converted to God.

Of the common natives of Ireland it has been fre-

quently observed, that of all the natives of the globe, there are none who exceed them for hospitality, good-nature, and susceptibility of religious impressions. It might well, therefore, occasion the "yearning of the bowels" of this lover of souls, to see such multitudes of them detained in total ignorance by their priests, to whom they pay the most implicit obedience.

And hence it was that, from the beginning of the concern which he felt for his own soul, he set himself, by all possible means, "to turn them from darkness to light;" and whether in the highways, at inns, in the city or country, he let slip no probable means of instructing them. One circumstance, which is much more common in Ireland than England, I mean the number of street-beggars, furnished him with frequent opportunities of this kind.

His manner of addressing them was easy and familiar, talking to them always in a style suited to their capacity and prejudices. He avoided entirely the difference of churches, and all matters of dispute, speaking only of the dreadful evil of sin, the great affairs of eternal life and eternal death, of judgment, and of the sufferings and sacrifice of the Son of God. And his discourses had often such immediate effect, that falling on their knees, and smiting their breasts, they have wept, and cried for mercy, in the open streets. He always concluded his instructions with giving them money, if he had it; which, indeed, was not always the case.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the conversations and various intercourses which he had with members of that communion, and the good effects which were produced by them. Two or three only may be related, from his own accounts.

"This day — came to my room. I asked him, how he hoped to be saved? And having talked together in Irish for some time, he became greatly affected, and said, 'I have saved some money, to leave to some priest or friar, when I die, in order to procure me the forgiveness of my sins; and I am willing to leave it to you, if you will accept of it.' I told him that no man could forgive his sins; that the gift of God was not to be purchased with money; that only the blood of Christ, our great High Priest, could cleanse from sin; and to this effect. He was deeply wounded, and cried earnestly to God; to whom, after prayer, I commended him."

At another time he writes, "A poor woman, a Papist, came to my room, desirous of salvation. I prayed with her in Irish. She frequently fell on her knees, and cried for mercy, resolving no more to regard the priest's curses, but to seek her salvation according as the word of God directs."

Again:—"Being on a journey, where I breakfasted, (it was a Romanist's,) I reprov'd the landlord for swearing, and talked to all who were present. I exhorted, likewise, a woman at the door to seek from God repentance and salvation. She cried with amaze to the blessed Virgin and to the twelve apostles to help her. But I taught her to direct her prayers to God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Beside his frequent occasional conversations with them, he went as often and to as many of their own houses as he could get admittance to, where he regarded the children and servants even as the masters and mistresses.

But what most of all contributed to the success of his attempts for their good, was his public preach-

ing, to which great numbers of them frequently resorted, wherever he came ; induced thereto chiefly by his preaching in Irish, and such things as they easily understood. There is, in the Irish language, a peculiarly affecting expressiveness, particularly with respect to the things of God ; which, being pressed home upon the conscience by his zealous and alarming way of preaching, often left them bathed in tears. I saw a very remarkable instance of this in the town of my nativity : preaching there on a market-day, and many of the country people running with surprise to hear him, they smote their breasts, and wept in such a manner as was entirely new to them, some affirming, that they could go all over the world with him ! It may be truly said, he seldom preached a sermon in Irish from which some of them did not receive certain advantage. He briefly mentions a few instances himself, as follows :—

“After preaching both in Irish and English, a Popish woman came to me, saying she came for instruction ; for that, as she was a poor woman, she could not have it elsewhere, and she wanted to save her soul. I told her that all which was in my power I would do for her willingly. She wept, and I prayed with her, pointing her, for all her soul wanted, to Jesus, who alone is ‘the way, the truth, and the life.’ ”

Again:—“January 4th, 1751. My soul was delighted to see with what earnestness the poor Irish ” (meaning the Romanists) “received the word, being in general deeply affected. O, how did they weep and cry for mercy ! May God hear their prayer ! Surely this people will rise up in judgment against the Protestants, who, having the light of the Gospel, either neglect or despise it ; and also against the pastors of

this ignorant people, who hold them in error. O, what have the Romish clergy to answer for before God !”

“April, 1751.—Many of them professed, after preaching, that they received more benefit from that one sermon, than from all the masses they had attended during their whole life.”

At another time, preaching concerning the good Samaritan, (Luke x. 30–37,) “two members of the Church of Rome were deeply convinced of their want of a Saviour, and thirty-four persons joined themselves together to seek and serve the Lord.”

“Friday, May 8th.—I conversed with a woman who was formerly of the Church of England, but had been seduced by the Romish priests. She was convinced of her error, and returned. To God be the glory.”

“After preaching on John i. 17, sinners cried out mightily. One came confessing her deeds, and said she had lived an adulteress, worse than Mary Magdalene : she wept, trembled, and roared, and strove.”

The circumstance of his preaching and speaking in Irish, (a thing that multitudes, at least of Protestants, in Ireland cannot do, and among whom the writer, to his grief, is one,) next to the singular blessing of God upon his labours, contributed most to the success of his endeavours among them. Though it is remarkably observable, that, preaching one day on Oxmontown-Green, in Dublin, among those who were affected by the discourse there was one man cut to the heart, although he did not at all understand the language.

In a journey, once, between Cork and Bandon, he fell into conversation with a man, who rode some miles with him, till, as was his constant manner, he began to apply something to his heart, concerning the worth of his soul, and the way of salvation.

But he, savouring not the things of God, became grievously offended. "His prejudice, in short, ran so high, that he declared, although he were shot for it, he would have satisfaction; adding, with an oath, 'Thou shalt never deceive another; for I am resolved to be the death of you just now.'

"I was quiet in my mind, being persuaded that the God of Daniel was still the same: I did not feel the least anger or rising of revenge to him; and still reproved him whenever he swore. In the midst of his rage, I reproved him in Irish. He was instantly amazed; and replied, 'Why did you not speak so to me in the beginning?' The lion became a lamb; and I then let him know, still speaking in Irish, what Christ had done for sinners. He departed with a broken heart."

When some of them once followed him, after preaching, desirous of instruction, "I told them," says he, "as to religion, that it was not a bare profession which would avail any one: that the true way was, to forsake sin, and follow Christ; and that in order thereto, it was needful that a person should, 1. Be poor in spirit; feel that he is a sinner. 2. Mourn on that account, with a broken and contrite heart. 3. Forsake sin, by applying to the Lord for strength. 4. Believe in Christ, and Him only, for salvation; as it is His blood alone that cleanseth from all unrighteousness: and, 5. Obey the Gospel, by conforming to the rules there laid down; living 'soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.'"

This was the sum of what he taught them from time to time, as the way of salvation, which, explained and enforced by the holy Scriptures, he opposed to every other device, or tradition of men,

which they, at any time, objected to him, as a ground of their hope of heaven. It is a summary of his sentiments how a sinner comes to find favour with God. And so zealously concerned was he for enforcing these truths wherever he came, that once, amidst a great number of Romanists, whose attention some endeavoured to hinder, he said, "If my doctrine be not according to the word of God, stone me on the spot. Make a sacrifice of me : only hear for yourselves."

"O that God would call them to the knowledge of the Gospel of peace, and open to them a door of salvation! Open, Lord, the eyes of their priests. Remember the purchase of Thy blood; nor suffer those poor souls to perish, for whom Christ hath died."

CHAPTER V.

He goes to England, and labours there.

THE enlargement of soul with which it pleased God so signally to bless him left no bounds to his desires of spreading the savour of the knowledge of Jesus in every place; and his providential connexions afforded him a large sphere of action. The people with whom he was more immediately united, and who were, according to the Divine disposals, the instruments of his salvation, had now, through the blessing of heaven, spread the "joyful sound" well nigh all over England and Ireland. And hence arose a necessity for many helpers to the kingdom of God. And such he fully appeared to be.

"A zealous instrument of good,
A vessel fit for use Divine,

God on His church in love bestow'd,
And gave this burning light to shine."

It was therefore judged expedient, that (having been successfully employed between two and three years in his native country) he should go to England likewise: to which only the conviction of its being the will of God could have reconciled him; feeling, what was natural on the occasion, "a struggle," as he says, "within himself, on leaving his friends and country."

May 10th, 1753, he embarked at Dublin, with some other friends, and the next day arrived at Park-gate. Concerning this voyage, and his arrival in England, he writes as follows:—"There were on board several gentry and officers, with a large number of cabin-passengers. They cursed, swore, and blasphemed, as though they were in hell. I reproved them again and again; but they still persisted, and said I was mad. O God, if there never was any other damnation in the world to come, than even the company of such wretches, who would not flee from it?*

* The thoughts which the following lines suggest seem natural on the occasion; and will not, I presume, be unacceptable to some readers:—

"Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world without a stain.
We see, we hear, with peril; safety dwells
Remote from multitude; the world's a school
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around!
We must or imitate, or disapprove:
That stains our innocence; this wounds our peace.
From nature's birth, hence, wisdom has been smit
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade."

"My God, I cannot but admire Thy goodness towards me. I heartily praise and magnify Thy name, for preserving me on the great deep. O Thou Lover of my soul, I beseech Thee come with me hither! Open my mouth in wisdom and in righteousness, that I may preach Christ crucified to the people of England. Jesus, Master, stand by me, and strengthen my body and soul!

'Embolden by Thine outstretch'd arm,
Fill me with confidence Divine;
With heavenly zeal my bosom warm,
That all may own the work is Thine.

'Give them an ear to hear the word
Thou speakest to Thy churches now,
And let all tongues confess their Lord
And let all hearts to Jesus bow.

'Open my mouth, and utterance give,
Give me a trumpet-voice to call
A world, who all may turn and live,
Through faith in Him that died for all.'"

London was the place where he was appointed chiefly to labour. He arrived there the 31st of May, 1753, and preached his first sermon from 1 John ii. 1.

And now did he, more vigorously than ever, apply himself, both in public and in private, to the labour of his calling; resolving, in a place of such opportunities, and of such dangers, to make the very best use of both. He found himself in the midst of a numerous and well-instructed people, many of whom were deeply experienced in the things of God. This was to him matter of great joy, though at the same time of much carefulness, knowing, that in order to be truly profitable to them, a superficial acquaintance with things would

but ill suffice. He therefore "laboured" to be a scribe "well-instructed;" to be deeply and judiciously informed, in things pertaining to the kingdom of God. It was his daily and nightly study, how he might best contribute his part towards the feeding them with the sincere milk of the word of God, and the building them up in their most holy faith.

But neither did he here intermit his endeavours for the salvation of his poor ignorant countrymen, (of whom great numbers of the lower sort are constantly employed in London,) still detained in that darkness from which he had so happily escaped himself. He therefore appointed times for explaining, to as many of them as would hear, the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and preached several times in Irish, in Moorfields and elsewhere; endeavouring, likewise, to have as many private interviews with them as he possibly could.

It was here he first formed to himself a more exact plan for the improvement of his time, with respect to his public and private capacity as a preacher and a Christian; assigning determinate portions of it to certain employments, which, unless when necessity required it otherwise, he punctually observed. He preached constantly twice a day, and visited many of the people in their families; besides frequent attendance on the sick and dying, from some of whom he was rarely a day absent.

The abilities with which God had endowed him, and his faithful improvement of them, considerably increased his work; for it seemed good to those whom the Divine wisdom had honoured with the oversight of a multitude of persons here, in their absence, to entrust him with that branch of their

work. His exactness and submissive faithfulness therein appeared in many and various particulars, of which a part only may be gathered from the following letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley :—

“HONOURED SIR,

“I THANK you for your letter. I longed exceedingly to hear from you. Your account of the good woman in your Journal was refreshing to my soul. What I have to say at present is as follows :—

“1. Mr. Wesley is gone to Bristol. He met us on Monday mornings, and upon the whole all was well. We parted in much love. 2. Mr. F—— goes on well. I converse with him when I can. 3. The Lord is powerfully carrying on His work. Sinners are alarmed, and saints edified. This day, in visiting the sick, my soul was greatly comforted by hearing of God’s dealings with their souls. 4. Brother M—— is gone to Bristol; B. M——l to Norwich; and B. F—— talks of leaving us next week. B. D—— and the local preachers are with me; and, as Mr. F—— gives us such assistance, I hope the places will be supplied.

“Mr. B——, I hear, has preached lately at —— : several are offended. I dare determine nothing; but ask, What shall be done? 5. On Monday I began to change the tickets, &c. God give me integrity, wisdom, meekness, and love. I think, considering these particulars, I cannot leave London yet. It seems Providence keeps me here still.

“You have the prayers of your children. I do not forget you. A son honoureth his father, and a father loveth his son. Let it be so till death, and

the devil can get little advantage. Your preaching has been often and exceedingly blessed to my soul. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that the Lord would make me partaker of His holiness.

"Dear sir, I trust your soul will, in time and in eternity, partake of that great salvation you have preached in the name of the Lord. O, may it please God, that we may meet full of holy and happy love! I feel my soul this moment strongly drawn after God; but there is yet something that keeps me out of perfect rest and liberty. Jesus, take my whole heart! Confound, overpower me with Thy grace! Requesting your prayers and counsel, I remain

"Your very affectionate son,

"THOMAS WALSH.

"LONDON, *April 30th.*"

His heart being entirely set upon the things of heaven, and taken up wholly with designs of pleasing Him whose providence had disposed of him in this manner, set him upon pursuing, with all the ardour of his soul, whatever he judged might best promote such an end. His genius also fitted him for profiting by the variety of assistances, in point of learning and religion, which his present situation afforded him; so that his advancement in Divine knowledge, and in Divine life, while he remained here, became every day still more and more visible. The fruit of his public ministry was likewise still more discernible; as was likewise the general tenor of his conduct more acceptable to the people. They had abundant evidence of his devotedness to God, and of his truly serving as a son in the Gospel. He was generally blessed to all kinds of hearers. His discourses were always of an awakening nature, enter-

ing into the very heart ; and singularly calculated to assist such as were ardently seeking after “ perfect love.” (1 John iv. 17, 18.) And hereby, through the Divine blessing, he became instrumental to such a revival of the work of God as had not been known, as to its depth, from the first union of that Society of which he was a member ; and which, blessed be God, has increased with added lustre ever since ; nor are there a few in London who bless God that ever they heard his voice, and to whom the memory of Walsh will be for ever precious.

The zealous fervour for God which appeared in his whole conduct,—the discourses about heavenly things, and present soul-concerns, which he often held at meals to the servants, and frequently in the kitchen,—occasioned an elderly woman of known piety, who belonged to the house, to take particular notice of him. She diligently attended to most of his ways which came within her observation ; and, without letting anyone know of it, watched even his secret retirements : partly to be fully satisfied of his integrity, and partly to have matter of still greater joy at finding his life all of a piece. She did so several times, and found, as she expected and desired, a happy consistency between the whole of his behaviour, public and private. She observed him through the key-hole, or some crevice of the door, and sometimes saw him upon his knees, sometimes prostrate upon the ground. His countenance was commonly, at those times, lifted up to heaven, often as it were inflamed ; and often, in tears, would he deeply sigh to God !

Thus did he spend the time of his abode in England, spreading the savour of his good ointment all around him wherever he came ; and by his example,

as well as preaching, pressing everyone to make sure work for eternity. He perceived clearly it was the good providence of God which prepared his way, and directed him hither, and could bless Him unfeignedly on that account. He came from Ireland to London three several times; the last of which was the longest time of his continuing there, (about two years,) and the most profitable, both to himself and to others. And here especially it was, that through his great and incessant labours, his unwearied application to private study and public ministrations, he laid the foundation of that disorder which, at length, resisting the force of all medicine, removed him to another world.

CHAPTER VI.

His Love to Souls, and Zeal for promoting the Glory of God.

SOME account of his endeavours for the salvation of his neighbour has already been given. But this, being so considerable a part of his character, deserves a more full consideration; though, in reality, it cannot be told of how many and various expedients he served himself for the conversion of sinners.

The language of his whole conduct was, in truth, what on a certain occasion he breathed out in the following words:—"O, how does my soul thirst for the salvation of all men! How does my heart bleed with desire, that the fulness of the Gentiles were brought in, and that all Israel might be saved!"

It was this feeling concern for the coming of the kingdom of Christ, in the general conversion of

mankind, which raised him superior to whatsoever hardships and difficulties attended his conduct in reference thereto. He watched every opportunity; and was, literally, "instant in season, out of season;" that is, continually, at all times and places, seeking how he might best accomplish the end for which alone he desired to live.

The intenseness of his desire, and his application to this "one thing," kept him continually as on the wing of spending, and being spent, in this behalf; regarding neither reproach, pain, loss, imprisonments, nor death itself. "I have," as he said on a certain occasion, "but one life; and it is a hard case if I cannot readily lose that for His sake, who gave His life a ransom for mine, and for the life of the world. My soul bleeds for the world which lieth in the wicked one."

He seemed to have continually before his eyes that which the Son of God suffered out of love for man. It was the spring whence proceeded his ardent zeal for the glory of his Lord, in the salvation of the purchase of His blood; and he imagined that the best testimony he could give of his love to Him was to suffer something for His sake. It was his desire to give life for life; and to requite Him, as he thought, even by death itself.

It was owing to this, likewise, that he embraced every possible opportunity of crying aloud, in the most conspicuous places of public resort, and of enforcing the voice of Wisdom, saying, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and scorers delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge! Turn ye at My reproof: behold, I will pour out My Spirit upon you, I will make known My words unto you." (Prov. i. 22, 23.)

Mountains, market-places, highways, meadows, rooms, prisons, and ships, were the frequent theatres of his publishing the Gospel of peace. And herein there appeared in him something next to marvellous, being a living fire, continually burning in the love of God and man; still mounting upwards, and kindling all that were capable about him; as prone to fervour and activity, as some are to coldness and indolence. He was never weary of well-doing, nor ever spoke slightly, and with an indifferent affection, of the great God, and of the things of religion in general; but with a seriousness and reverence becoming one who, by faith, saw the Invisible, and looked to be shortly with Him.

He was in truth (as is said of Luther) a mighty adversary to the devil's kingdom, and took every possible step which he judged might, in any measure, promote the honour of God, to whose sole glory he sacrificed himself, with all his labours and studies. It is scarcely possible so to represent, as to enable a stranger to him adequately to conceive, the flow of his soul, and energy of his spirit and expressions, on these occasions, while he endeavoured, by all means, to save some. To this end he truly imparted, not the Gospel of God only, but likewise his own soul, withholding nothing which he judged might be beneficial to the people. It was this noble object of pursuit which raised him likewise above even that necessary attention to his body which it greatly required. It was truly said of him,—

“ He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of his swift decline;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To spread the righteousness Divine.

“He truly triumph’d in the Cross,
Its prints as on his body show’d;
Lavish of life for Jesu’s cause,
Whose blood for all so freely flow’d.”

The fire which burned in his heart never said, “It is enough.” And the success with which it pleased our Lord to prosper his labours was a constant motive to his still going forward. His designs of doing good were without limits, esteeming himself, in this respect, a debtor to all, and embracing, in affection, not less than the whole world.

Riding through Wales, at one time, and finding that in many places they did not understand English, he felt great concern on that occasion, and formed a resolution, if his life and health permitted, he would learn the Welsh language for their sakes.

When, at another time, in a passage to Ireland, he was driven in thither to a place where they understand English, he let slip no opportunity of preaching to and visiting them daily, during his stay there, at their own houses, exhorting them (as he says on the occasion) “to seek the Lord while He may be found.” Several were convinced, and took knowledge that they must follow Christ through evil report, and suffer for Him, if they would live with Him in glory.

There were not wanting to him, from time to time, several discouraging circumstances in his progress. It was given him not only to believe, and therefore to speak for God, but also to suffer for His cause and glory. Col. i. 24 was, in his measure, truly fulfilled in him: he rejoiced in his sufferings, and filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for His body’s sake, which is the church.

But the end which he still kept in view, together with his seasonable and frequent reflections on the love of Jesus ; the danger of sinners dying without conversion ; and the present salvation to which they are entitled, through the blood of the Lamb : these raised him more than superior to everything which either men, or the cruel malice of Satan, could invent against, or inflict upon, him.

His warm heart (Luke xxiv. 32) and fervent courage feared no danger in the discharge of his duty ; being well assured, that walking uprightly, he walked surely. He dreaded not the faces of men, but, where occasion offered, boldly reprov'd what he saw amiss in everyone. Wherever there appeared any probability of his doing good, he was never hindered therefrom by the prospect of personal danger : expressing by his whole conduct,—

“ To leave my calling I disdain ;
Behind I will not stay,
Though shame, and loss, and bonds, and pain,
And death obstruct my way.

“ Secure from danger, and from dread,
Nor earth nor hell shall move,
Since over me Thy hand hath spread
The banner of Thy love.”

In one place, having preached to a vast number of Romanists and others, and a prospect appearing of doing much good among them, he intended to go thither again. But a report prevailed, that if he attempted it, a certain great man would either have him stoned, or sent to gaol. “ On this occasion I reflected,” says he, “ what God had done in former times for those who put their trust in Him. And He gave me strength according to my day. I found

my faith in Him greatly strengthened, and resolved simply to rely on His protection ; not doubting but that He would stand by me. So I went thither, and preached in the name of the Lord.

“The fear of man prevented their giving me entrance into their houses, as before ; so I stood on a chair in the street, and thanked God for the privilege. They received the word without disturbance, and with joy. On my return, I prayed at two houses in the way, and the power of God was greatly in the midst of us. Praised be God and the Lamb for ever !

‘ The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wand’ring sons of men ;
With cries, entreaties, tears to save
And snatch them from the’ infernal grave.

‘ My life, my blood, I here present,
If for Thy truth they may be spent !
Fulfil Thy sovereign counsel, Lord,
Thy will be done, Thy name adored.’ ”

His labours were, indeed, much beyond the strength of his dying body, and his fervent zeal would not suffer him to stand still ; so that his friends were obliged sometimes (as Origen’s mother, to prevent her young son’s burning with his father) to hide his clothes, or lock him in his room in the morning.

His whole conversation was like fire ; warming, refreshing, and comforting all that were about him, and begetting in their souls a measure of the same zealous concern for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, which burned in his own breast. It was not possible to be much with him, and not to hear discourses which bred a detestation of sin, and

a love of holiness. "To what purpose is it to live," (seemed the motto of his life,) "and not to live to some good purpose?"

His endeavours to do good extended to children also. He first introduced in many places the custom of meeting weekly such of them as could attend, in order to instruct them in such truths, relating to godliness, as their years and capacity admitted of. In doing which, he desired their parents might be present likewise; to whom his affecting manner of address was not less serviceable than to the children themselves, both often weeping together.

While in London, he had several interviews with the Jews, frequently attending their synagogues, and reasoning with them out of their own Hebrew Scriptures. And although I cannot say with certainty that any of them were converted, yet sure I am, from eye-witnesses, that they were not able to gainsay the power by which he spoke.

When, at any time, he met any of his Christian acquaintance in the street, or only just called at their houses passing by, which was frequently the case, he had always something to say by way of a watchword, which he left upon their minds. Such as, "Well, let us hold out a little longer!—Are we pressing forward?—Let us hold fast faith, and a good conscience.—Are we watching now unto prayer, and pressing after perfect love?" and to this purpose. I well remember one instance of the good effects of this, which a person mentioned to me since his death. "I shall never forget," says he, "a word which Mr. Walsh, taking me by the hand one day, spoke to me in my shop: 'Tis worse than death my God to love, and not my God alone.'" It was like a nail in a sure place, and left a useful

impression upon the person's mind ever after. The gravity and earnestness with which he delivered these kinds of little mementoes to his friends, carried them, by God's help, to the heart, and left them there. So that I have heard several of his sayings, in this way, called to remembrance since his decease, by several of his acquaintance.

A certain person meeting a brother, one day, who seemed to do what he was about negligently, "Brother," said he, "that which you are about, for whom do you do it?" The brother answered, that he did it "for the love of God." "Certainly," replied he, "if you did it for the love of God, you are highly to blame. The sin is not so great, though it is not commendable, to be a little slack in serving men; but to serve God negligently is intolerable."

This was far from being the case with him. He did whatsoever he did for God with all his might, spending his very life in every action, even as though he should merit heaven thereby; and yet, at the same time, heartily despising and rating himself as an unprofitable servant.

In short, as one truly born from above, (John i. 13,) his soul had a vehement tendency towards heaven, whither he would fain bring the whole world. His heart and treasure being there, this world, with all its furniture, its idle pomp, and fading joys, were as nothing to him; being dead, and "crucified with Christ:" with zeal for whose glory, and for souls, the purchase of His blood, he was, as it were, eaten up continually.

CHAPTER VII.

*His Application to Study, Love to the Holy Scriptures,
and Improvement in Divine Knowledge.*

THE first materials of his learning were not very considerable: he had acquired some knowledge of Latin in his childhood, but left it off for the mathematics; so that, by the time he resumed his grammatical studies, he had almost all to do again. However, the strength of his natural capacity, and intense application to study, after his conversion, soon recovered to him what he had lost, with vast increase.

From the time of his first deep concern about the business of his salvation, he read, as has been intimated, the word of God with unwearied application; and everything else, only as it had some reference to the truths contained therein: and this practice he continued with increasing diligence and delight, till sickness wholly disqualified him for all study; and to such a degree of eminence did he arrive therein, that I believe it may be said, with truth, he was scarce ever a moment, waking, wherein he was not either talking of, reading, or meditating on, one truth or other contained in holy Scripture.

At first, he read the English Bible chiefly; but his endeavours for the good of many of his ignorant countrymen induced him to read, and get well acquainted with, the New Testament in Irish likewise. His penetrating genius, however, bent upon the best matters, and desirous to enter into the depth of Divine truth, led him, by all means, to

search into the true ground and bottom of things. He considered, that to work profitably in the conversion of souls, some parts were required which were wanting in him; and that in the present state of things, without the foundation of some human learning, little could be solidly performed.

The desire which he had of being made useful to his neighbour, aiming herein at God's great glory, which he now proposed to himself as his only rule, made easy to him the hardest mental exercises, and overcame in him all repugnancy to close application. He had, it is true, a natural propension to study, which rendered it much more easy to him in his advanced years; and which, together with a kind of impatience to give himself entirely up to the service of souls, made him enter upon and follow his studies with extreme eagerness.

He set himself, therefore, to understand the Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and the New, in their original Hebrew and Greek: the former, indeed, had his chief, though not his first, regard. It was not till after he had acquired some tolerable knowledge of the Greek Testament, that he entered upon the study of Hebrew. This was at London, about December, 1755. He agreed with a Jew to instruct him, at the rate of a shilling an hour. A few lessons served all the ends he needed; (having known the letters before;) and being fully initiated into the genius of the language, he soon became swallowed up in it, so to speak, making it, ever after, the chief subject of his studies, in respect of human learning.

The matter of the study so endeared the language to him, that he proceeded therein with an almost incredible swiftness of improvement. He discovered

every day such a depth of "hidden wisdom" in the writings of Moses and the prophets, (John i. 15,) read in their own original tongue, as he could hardly have conceived from our translation, though, for the most part, deemed the best in the world.

The advancement in Divine knowledge which he perceived in himself, from the study of the holy Scriptures in this language, was matter of his admiration, as well as thanksgiving. He found that the Hebrew Scriptures contain the sum of all we can know in divinity, (considered as a science,) or in natural things. And one may venture to say, "He who attempts to be either a divine or a philosopher, without understanding the great use and benefit of this elucidating sun, of God's forming and fixing up, in the heaven of His most holy word, is just as wise as he who would traverse the mighty ocean without a compass."

"Ignorance of the Hebrew Scriptures has been the next cause of all the jargon published in defence of them, of all the infidelity in the world, of all the false philosophy and errors in divinity amongst us; and in proportion as they are understood, these misleading principles must vanish and disappear. The Hebrew language is stamped with the character of Divinity, whilst all others (the Greek not excepted) wear the badge of Babel. And while other languages must be resolved into that confusion which gave them birth, and whilst these are the channels of all error, that remains the source of all truth; the fountain from whence it springs, the point in which it centres, the garden where it grows, the mine from whence it must be dug."

"There is something," says Mr. Addison, "so pathetic in its diction, that it often sets the mind in

a flame, and makes our hearts burn within us. If anyone," continues he, "would judge of the beauties of poetry that are to be met with in the Divine writings, and examine how kindly the Hebrew manners of speech mix and incorporate with the English language, after having perused the Book of Psalms, let him read a literal translation of Horace or Pindar. He will find in these two last such an absurdity, and confusion of style, with such a comparative poverty of imagination, as will make him very sensible of what is here advanced. It has been said by some of the ancients, that if the gods were to talk with men, they would certainly speak in Plato's style; but I think we may say, with justice, that when mortals converse with their Creator, they cannot do it in so proper a style as that of the holy Scripture."

"From its Author, namely, God Himself, we have reason to expect the utmost perfection a language is capable of; viz., the utmost simplicity, certainty, and expressiveness. In a word, what can be imagined more worthy than that which leads us to the saving knowledge of God Himself; which shows the manner of attaining eternal salvation? O truly laudable and worthy study! O industry beyond all praise! whereby a man is enabled, in the same language, knowingly to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs, and with prophets, and clearly to unfold to men the mind of God, from the language of God."

He ascribed it to a special assistance from heaven, that the very study of the tongue, independently considered, became so easy and pleasant as he found it. And I have heard him mention this very particular, as an argument (at least to himself) of the

regard of heaven to this first, most simple, and excellent of languages;* in assisting those who, with upright minds, inquire into it after the mind of God. And to this purpose he writes as follows:—

“December 20th, 1756.—I spent the forenoon in my studies, in which God has, and does greatly assist me. About this time twelve-month I could not read a sentence of Hebrew with any certainty, or construe a verse with readiness. But now I can read my Bible through, and understand it, almost as well as Latin or English. This hath God done, enabling me to read His blessed word in the first and best of languages. O, may all my studies and talents be devoted to His glory!”

His application was indeed prodigious. I have

* “The Hebrew,” says Archbishop Usher, “is the first tongue of the world, and the most orderly speech; in comparison of which all other languages may be condemned for barbarous confusion.”

The Latins are said to drink out of pits, the Greeks out of streams, but the Hebrews out of fountains.

“The pre-eminence or excellency of this language,” says Bishop Walton, “is demonstrated by its antiquity, Divine origin, sanctity, perfection, (under which is comprehended its purity, elegance, energy, and apt significances of words,) and lastly, by its usefulness, and easiness to learn. It expresses things themselves properly and descriptively, so that no language can be compared with the Hebrew in this respect. It hath its peculiar beauties, which no other language can express.”

Amongst the statutes drawn out of the Provincial of the Jesuits’ Rules, one is, “He shall not suffer any to learn the Hebrew tongue, unless he be well persuaded first of their steadfastness in the Jesuitical divinity, and humble enough to make a right use of it.”

“Sure I am,” says an eminent writer on the subject, “that it ought to be the first language we are taught, after we have learned to lisp our own; and were I worthy to advise, the Oriental dialects should follow the Hebrew; the Greek should follow the Arabic; and the Latin be acquired by conversation and reading, in the same manner as the modern languages of Europe are acquired.”

known him (strange as it may seem) to spend fourteen hours of the four-and-twenty, in this study, excepting only the intervals of prayer, which he frequently poured out for His blessing, whose inspiration alone teacheth man true wisdom. He often intermixed a verse of praise or petition; and then, turning his face to the wall, and lifting up his heart and countenance to heaven, with his arms clasped about his breast, he would stand for some time before the Lord in solemn recollection, and then return to his work.

It was a rare thing ever to see him but with a book in his hand, hearing him speak of the things of God, or in meditation. When, in travelling, he at any time stopped at an inn, as soon as he was shown to his chamber, to stay whether for an hour or a night, he would, as though he forgot where he was, or what he came about, take out his little Hebrew Psalter, (which was a peculiarly favourite travelling companion of his,) or some other spiritual book, and fall immediately to his usual work; unless the time was otherwise taken up in exhorting the landlord or servants, or, in short, any he met with. Accommodations for his body were his smallest care; and his attention to these was always, as it were, by-the-by. He, like the tortoise, had his house always with him, and seemed everywhere, and yet nowhere, at home in this world. He pursued his work well nigh equally at all times and in all places, unless when sickness prevented, and seemed ("as the earth produceth fruit of itself") spontaneously to tend to God. Even after preaching sometimes near an hour and a half together, he has immediately resumed his studies, (having books always with him,) and this often where several persons have been talking

or otherwise employed, as their occasions required, round about him ; he still pursuing his work, as though he were retired in a closet : proceeding on the sentiment, that he had no other business in this world, than to pray, and preach, and study, and live, in every place, and in every thing, for God !

Although his study may be considered almost as a continual prayer, being managed in this manner, and being in its nature and design wholly referred to God ; nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the frequency of his stated times of prayer was, at first especially, much interrupted thereby : but he followed, for the most part, the light which he then had ; and, intending all his acquirements for the glory of God, in the interest of souls, he thought he might, in such a case, and on some occasions, (as one expresses it,) “ leave God, for God.”

He was not, however, without frequent jealousies over himself, fearing lest his so intense application, even to this kind of employment, should in any wise divert his heart from what he most prized, and most ardently desired, namely, close attention to Jesus. After a while, therefore, having mastered the main difficulties in his work, his application became much more moderate, and uniformly regular. He began to “ learn well to know, how much need not be known ;” and that

“ Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temperance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain ;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end ;
‘Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,

That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom ; what is more is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us, in things that most concern,
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek."

PARADISE LOST.

One day he writes as follows:—"I was all day closely employed at study. But I fear I love my books too much. It is true, my studies relate to the word of God ; but I often find my mind carried out in desire after languages, arts, and sciences ; yet I see the vanity of everything, when separate from God. To be sure, I prize the knowledge of Christ crucified above all other knowledge : to imitate His wisdom, goodness, meekness, patience, and love. Alas ! what are Hebrew, Greek, Latin, logic, metaphysics, everything, to this ? What is anything to the love of Jesus ? O that sweet peace of conscience, and contentment of mind, which arise from redemption in His blood ! O Lord, Thou knowest that I desire to be great in Thy grace ; to be armed with Thy armour. My soul longs to rise above these little, transitory things. I fain would rest in Thee ; I thirst for the Divine life. I pray for the Spirit of illumination. I cast my soul upon Jesus Christ, the God of glory, and Redeemer of the world. I desire to be conformable unto Him ; His friend, servant, disciple, and sacrifice ! Come now, my Jesus ! see the longings of my soul, and finish the work there."

From hence may be gathered, both what was the spirit of the man, and the tendency of his studies. He desired to know ; but it was God, and the things

of God, which he proposed to himself as the sole matter of his knowledge. For although he read occasionally both logic and metaphysics, history and natural philosophy, yet it was all with reference to his one grand point. Whatever treasures he gathered from abroad, in this or in any other way,—like the industrious bee, which, collecting his sweets in various parts, and from different weeds and flowers, deposits all in one hive,—he reduced, and made all his attainments subservient to the word of God, and acquaintance with Jesus, as his central point of everything.

And his fear, lest in anything he should deviate from this, had much influence on the regulation of his studies. He well knew, that to have a heart always at leisure for God, attentive to His teaching, and obedient to His dictates, is the great thing; to which every design and pursuit must give place, if we mean to be truly great in the grace of God; and that the heart is as capable of being overcharged with things, in some respects lawful and excellent, as with surfeiting and drunkenness, or cares of this life; all of which are, therefore, to be as carefully guarded against.

And, perhaps, there are few things by which the spirit of darkness so serves himself, among the thinking world, as by this very particular; a diverting the mind from proper application to the “one thing needful,” not, indeed, by things sensual or immoral, which they abhor, and would perhaps be shocked at the thought of; but by things in some respects innocent and plausible, if not necessary,—it may be, by curious speculations on government, the works of nature or grace, and ideal pursuits of various kinds.

“ More fond to fix the place of heaven or hell,
 Than studious this to shun, or that secure.
 ’Tis not the curious, but the pious, path
 That leads us to our point.

Humble love,

And not proud reason, keeps the door of heaven :
 Love finds admission, where proud science fails.
 Man’s science is the culture of his heart ;
 And not to lose his plummet in the depths
 Of nature, or the more profound of God.”

Bishop Taylor mentions it, as a saying of Cægidius, that an old and simple woman, who loves Jesus, may be greater than was Brother Bonaventure. And inasmuch as the giving our whole heart to God is that without which nothing in religion is truly available ; if this be not done, is it not the same thing, whether it be through gazing at the stars, catching butterflies, or committing adultery ? The death of the body is as fully effected by the prick of a lancet, as by the stroke of a cannon-ball. And to such, alas ! as procure the loss of their own soul, how little difference does it make, whether it was done by crimes of the grossest kind, or by what the flattery of self-love, and a mistaken world, call little things ! He was thoroughly sensible of his danger in this respect, and began to regulate himself accordingly.

He found, towards the conclusion of his studies in particular, that more true wisdom is obtained from God, by prayer and holy meditation, in one hour, than from the application of years to folio volumes ; and therefore esteemed one single sentiment, gained in this manner, of more value than a thousand speculations, acquired by mere dint of study, in the way of human science. He perceived well the difference which there is between studying,

barely to instruct others, (which, in its place, is also right and necessary,) and studying to perfect one's self: the former not necessarily implying any more than becoming humanly wiser; whereas the latter tends to make us better, because more holy, and produces that purity and disengagement which are absolutely necessary to receive the true light of the Holy Spirit. "The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom, and by them, too, in several degrees, and to various purposes; God herein distributing to everyone severally as He willeth: but to such as know not God, the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, if not totally rejected, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boar, and music to a camel."

His settled manner now was to assign the morning wholly to the reading, first, a chapter out of the Old Testament, and frequently some of the Psalms, in Hebrew. Then he read, and digested, some part of his Greek Testament. His manner of doing this took him up great part of the forenoon; and afterwards he read, wrote, or was otherwise employed, as occasions directed. He frequently had some persons to visit him for instruction in some point of learning, chiefly in Hebrew. Two or three young men of Cambridge, at different times, being in town, and knowing him, chose to be initiated by him in the Hebrew tongue. He was constantly as communicative as receptive of instruction, withholding nothing from anyone that he thought might be useful to them.

He read the Scriptures in order; beginning a book, and going through with it regularly; fixing

at the same time, upon such parts as had most immediate reference to the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel state of things; which he not only read most frequently, but likewise committed to memory. And the degree of perfection to which he arrived in this particular was really surprising. His acquaintance with the letter of Scripture, and his retentive memory, supplied him as with a constant Concordance. And it may be questioned whether there was a remarkable passage, historical, doctrinal, or preceptive, from Genesis to the Revelation, which he could not, on the bare mention of it, turn to immediately.

"Thy word," says he, "O Lord, I have taken for mine inheritance for ever. It is the joy of my heart, and of more value to me than millions of worlds. O God, give me understanding, that I may keep Thy law! But let my whole dependence be on Jesu's merits. He is my Advocate. Only by faith in Him I stand. He is my sure refuge and portion in the land of the living!"

Being at sea one time, and the weather becoming extremely tempestuous, the mariners were apprehensive of certain death. He, in like manner, expected the same, and put into his bosom, with all safety, a small Bible, which he had with him, resolving that what he so loved in life should not be parted from him even in death. Such was his love to, and singular esteem for, the word of God.

In this manner it was that he became, in truth, a scribe well instructed to the kingdom of heaven, and brought out of the treasury of his heart-experience the old and new and deep things of the word of Jehovah. It was from this fountain he derived his ideas, sentiments, and expressions, on all

occasions ; explaining doctrines, enforcing duties, and resolving difficulties, well nigh altogether in Scripture words. The "spirit of wisdom" so rested upon him, that there was nothing of a Divine nature which occurred to his own mind, or was proposed to him by others, respecting doctrines, experience, or practice, of which he could not speak with convincing clearness and satisfaction.

He had a singular faculty for throwing light upon doubtful cases ; and it was not unusual with him, by two or three words speaking, sometimes to set right, and entirely quiet, the minds of persons, perplexed before about points of doctrine or experience. A most remarkable instance of this I remember to have known in Ireland :—A person who was greatly embarrassed in his mind concerning a point in religion which appeared to him of great importance, and who had received no satisfaction from all his former researches on this head, came to Mr. Walsh, and related the matter to him ; which having heard, he only asked one question, requiring the person to answer. And whether it was that God just then shone upon the man's soul, and by His immediate light solved the difficulty ; or whether it was through mere rational conviction, resulting from the arguments implied in his question, I know not ; but he was instantly satisfied, and, being convinced of his former mistake, had no further uneasiness on the head.

His insight into the invisible world so realized to him things to come, that he spake of them as one who both heard and saw them. And they had their proportionable influence on the whole of his behaviour. He acted as in the immediate presence of God ; and thus went on, reading and meditating day

and night in the law of his God, and devouring, like another Ezekiel, the whole Divine volume.

CHAPTER VIII.

His Manner of Preaching.

At first, his sermons consisted chiefly of a number of well-chosen texts of Scripture, suited to the particular subject on which he treated; and which he, for the most part, cited, with both the chapter and verse. He had in this manner formed, as it were, a body of divinity in his head, which was a kind of storehouse of his sermons. Time and experience, however, brought him off from the custom of so particularly citing the places of the scriptures he made use of; unless in new and public places, (as fields and market-houses, &c., where he often published the joyful tidings, and) where he judged it singularly useful, both for the conviction and satisfaction of the hearers.

A constant course of reading, much conversation with the children of God, and the deep acquaintance which a life of faith, meditation, and prayer gave him with God, and with the motions of his own soul, greatly extended his views into Divine things in general; and furnished him with variety of subjects for the edification and comfort of the church of God: so that in the last two or three years of his course, his sermons had in them a depth and solidity far beyond those of his former years.

The state of his own heart had much influence on the particular subjects of his sermons; as is surely

the case with all to whom preaching is not a mere business of course, but, on the contrary, an affair of the weightiest importance in the world, requiring the deepest attention and most circumspect walking in persons exercised therein. He knew that the words of an unfeeling heart are but mere empty sounds; and that although they might please for the present, they, however, rarely profit the hearers. And it was on this account that, attending constantly to the motions of his own soul, he hardly ever preached a sermon without conveying nearly the like sensations to others, whether of deep contrition of spirit, holy mourning, or spiritual joy, which he felt in his own soul.

“When,” says he, “I am in heaviness, I am led to speak chiefly of trials; when lively and fervent, I am led to speak of the comforts of believers; and when I am hungering and thirsting after righteousness, I press upon others to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness. And hence I learn,—1st, How needful it is for a preacher to be in a right spirit himself, whenever he speaks to others;—and 2dly, The wisdom of God, in so ordering, that every soul might receive its portion of the milk of the word in due season.”

All his sermons might be truly said to be his own, from God. He stole not the word from his neighbour, (Jer. xxiii. 30,) nor caught at trivial incidents to furnish him with an hour’s discourse. His heart was a treasury well furnished, insomuch that he was never at a loss for something in season. Even sometimes, when he has been so necessarily taken up with other parts of his calling as not to have the least time for preparing to preach, but he has gone into

the pulpit immediately, yet the pourings out of his feeling soul evinced themselves to waiting hearts to be of God.

There was nothing whining, light, or trivial in his discourses ; nothing put on ; nothing that could excite an air of levity, much less laughter ; but rather, and which was commonly the case, groans, and tears, and cries. His sermons had in them such a depth of Divine truth, confirmed by the word of God, with such a greatness and majesty, as begot in the hearers an awe and reverence, which removed far away all petulancy and thoughtless irreverence of spirit ; and produced, in many, a solemnity and attention of soul becoming those who hear discourses for life and death eternal : to all of which his grave and mortified countenance contributed not a little. In short, his whole behaviour in the pulpit was such as became a messenger of God, put in trust with the ministry of reconciliation.

His discourses were of a general nature, suited to give a portion to everyone, as their need required ; milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat : though still they had this one main tendency with regard to all,—to excite people's hearts to the pure love of God. And, although he preached "faith in Christ," as the only way of obtaining all the good things of grace and glory, yet he did it in such a manner as effectually to guard it against the abuse of libertines, who turn the freeness of the grace of God into an occasion of wantonness ; who, while they promise liberty to themselves and others, are, at the same time, servants of corruption. Persons of this character could not, in the least, serve themselves from his discourses ; in every one of which he so preached faith in Christ, as to "establish the

law" in its true sense; that is, to secure all the interests of genuine holiness, both in heart and life; all the fruits of righteousness; the most rigorous regard to men's duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves.

When he first began to preach, his chief talent seemed to be for quickening such as were dead in trespasses and sins; to terrify careless sinners with the dread of God's judgments, alarming them, as it were, at their peril, to flee from the wrath to come. It was truly said of him,—

"He fierce on the Philistines flies,
Compels the captives to come in;
Spoils Satan of his lawful prize,
And tears them from the toils of sin."

His courage and resolution in this were such as are rarely to be found. He judged that there was nothing more likely to pull down the strongholds of Satan, than to lay the axe at the root of sin; and in all his sermons, he ever used to discover its filthy and detestable nature, pressing upon the conscience an entire purgation from dead works. And he did it in such a manner as often pierced the very joints and marrow of his hearers.

It was easy to discover in him likewise the utmost impartiality. Knowing that he was to deliver his Lord's message, he spared no man, from any human or interested regards; but boldly detecting their sin, commended himself to every man's conscience in the "sight of God."

And yet his utmost zeal was tempered with wisdom and discretion; for notwithstanding his pressing vehemently upon the conscience of his hearers, in all his sermons, yet (although some were some-

times offended, charging him with binding heavy burdens, and the like) they were never able to resist the authority by which he spake.

But it was not as a Boanerges, a son of thunder, only, that he excelled. His own happy experience of the forgiving, healing, and comforting virtue of the blood of Jesus, together with his mighty acquaintance with the promises of life in Him, fitted him for administering comfort, and much encouragement, to the weary and heavy-laden with sin. To such he was, in truth, "a son of consolation;" his lips dropped sweetness to them, as the honey-comb, while they poured forth abundantly

"Thoughts, immaculate and pure,
Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments!"

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

O God, how many a bleeding wound hast Thou made him an instrument of healing, by pouring into the hearts of the disconsolate "the wine and oil" of the Gospel, in a rich profusion of those precious golden promises, which, being ratified to us by the holy blood of Thy dear Son, are all yea and amen in Him, to Thine eternal glory! Yes,—

"Refreshing, soft, as vernal showers,
His word on weary sinners falls,
Or like the rapid torrent pours,
While souls to Jesu's blood he calls!"

It was scarcely possible for the most obdurate, icy, and rocky heart, to remain long so, under his moving and authoritative discourses, laid home to the conscience by the sword of the Spirit, which, like the flaming sword in Paradise, he turned every way, to every heart. And, accordingly, it was a very

rare thing for him ever to preach a sermon without sending some away either broken-hearted, rejoicing in God, or increased, more or less, in the knowledge of the Crucified.

Towards the latter part of his progress, the two last years of his life especially, the whole bent of his soul, his reading, meditations, prayer, conversation, and preaching, tended altogether to "the deep things of God," (1 Cor. ii. 10,) the so perfectly loving Him, with all the capacity of the soul and body, as the state of humanity can possibly admit. The entire salvation of God from all sin to all the mind that was in Christ Jesus, was now his constant and most beloved theme, both in public and private. And he omitted nothing which might either inform his judgment, or affect his own, or the hearts of others, in reference to this most interesting concern of the children of God.

His thoughts on this head became, therefore, thoroughly digested; so that there was hardly an objection which either Satan, men, or the heart of unbelief could bring against it, for which he had not a convincing answer. His own heart-acquaintance therewith will be seen from a subsequent account of his experience. The light which he had into the nature, and his fervent manner of enforcing the worth and necessity, of Christian holiness, was one great means of enkindling, in the hearts of many, that fire (Luke xii. 49) of pure love to God and man, which has, since his death, likewise increased more abundantly, and still burns (O, may it ever burn!) amongst us, to the greater glory of God. Only such as were experimental witnesses of it, having a true relish for things of so high a nature, can rightly conceive of the abilities with which God endowed

him for this part of his work ; of the manner in which he,

“ With strength and utterance from above,
Urged on the saints, through grace forgiven,
To scale the mount of holiest love,
To seize the brightest throne in heaven ! ”

In all his discourses on the subject, he, as much as may be, carefully avoided his own words, both in explaining and enforcing its nature, extent, and the means of attaining thereto. He did it in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, explaining those spiritual things with spiritual words ; (1 Cor. ii. 13 ;) while, in the mean time, his fervent and affecting manner of urging them, and indeed every other part of the doctrine of salvation, commanded

“ Audience and attention still as night,
Or summer’s noon-tide air.”

PARADISE LOST.

He had not, it must be acknowledged, at least he made but little use of, the art of preaching : not, indeed, that he was ignorant of such rules as orators lay down for ordering and conducting of public discourses. His knowledge both of logic and rhetoric was far from being inconsiderable. He both read, and in some good degree digested, the principles of both. But the eagerness with which he undertook and proceeded in his work ; and the rapid flow of his soul, sending forth its “ good matter,” not like the distilling of a water-pot, but as a plentiful shower from the heavens, watering deep and wide all around, did not suffer him to attend with exactness to such niceties in composition or delivery ; nay, even prevented that moderation, as to the length

and manner of delivering his discourses, which would have been much more easy to himself and to his audience, many of whom were often in pain for him.

Though afterwards, when the repeated advice of his friends, and the necessity of his constitution, obliged him to a more slow and deliberate manner, some ascribed it to (what they called) his "want of power;" the loss of what he once had: such is the folly and weakness of many, in their sentiments with regard to this particular. How common is it to imagine, that the presence and power of the Spirit of God, and that influence by which souls are awakened, justified, or built up in holiness, depends upon, at least has some connexion with, the loudness of the preacher's voice, the swiftness of his expression, and the like; in other words, upon the strength of a man's lungs, and, it may be, in the assurance of his gesture and utterance!—a sentiment not more strange to the truly wise, than it is common with many, and which justly deserves to be detected and exploded. As though noise and animal activity should be dignified with the names of spirit and power; and the want of them ascribed to dryness, deadness, and formality! Strictly speaking, indeed, there is no necessary Divine power in any man's manner of speaking, whether loud or low, swiftly or softly. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," and as He pleaseth; and it may be questioned whether effects that have been sometimes produced by a loud, vehement, and overbearing manner of speaking, were not in great measure merely animal or mechanical, if not sometimes of Satan himself, to cast an odium upon the work of God. In truth, the most substantial, well-wearing, and genuine effects of the Gospel ministry arise, as far as circumstances con-

tribute thereto, from its delivery, not with noise and mere human vehemence, (which often rather call off the minds of too many from the inward life and communion with God,) but with distinct calmness and wise deliberation.

There may be often a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire; but the Lord is in the "still, small voice." (1 Kings xix. 11-13.) And these are only in order to this. His word, it is true, is a sword and a hammer, which wounds and breaks human hearts in pieces; and by how much any one's manner of speaking contributes towards the so doing, so far it is to be commended. But, considered independently of this, (which is too often the case,) the loudness of a man's voice is in reality no better than the blowing of a trumpet, or the sound of a drum. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." What is here intended is nakedly to represent a too common mistake, in order, in some measure, to its removal.

His sermons were seldom less than an hour long; and yet had in them such an agreeable variety, judicious explanation of Scripture, and affecting energy, that they were rarely, if ever, tedious, unless to such as wanted a savour for the things of God. Often might one see, on these occasions,

"Attentive crowds the heavenly words admire,
Hang on his lips, and catch the sacred fire;
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient of the skies."

He was always, at the conclusion, in a bath of sweat. And, the place of preaching being often at some distance from his lodging, his suddenly growing cold again was one reason of the frequency of

the fevers which he had from time to time during his whole life of public labour.

He often resolved, before he began to preach, to restrain the rapidity of his spirit; but in vain: "the sword," as he once said to me, when speaking to him on the head, "being too keen for the scabbard." The fervour of his soul broke through all resolutions, rejoicing to spend and to be spent for the Lord Jesus; but wasting, at the same time, and cutting away the very springs of his animal life, which although, at the time, he had no apprehension of, yet he felt it immediately afterwards.

With regard to the manner of his preparing for sermons, he seemed to keep between the two extremes, of an enthusiastic disregard to, or neglect of, all actual previous preparation on the one hand, and a merely dry scholastic composition of exact materials on the other. To have no regard to the matter and manner of his discourses beforehand, under the pretence of dependence upon Heaven for immediate influence and utterance, he judged to be rank enthusiasm; and often a cloak for a lazy, lounging, indolence of spirit; on account of which, nonsense has been too often dignified with the sacred names of inspiration and power. And yet, on the other hand, he judged it nearly, if not alike culpable, to seek after and trust to mere dry human skill, in fixing upon heads, and taking such measures, as to preach often only one's self, independent, as it were, of the quickening, enlightening presence of the Holy Ghost, without which all preaching and all hearing are equally vain. He prayed and studied, and studied and prayed again, going always (unless necessity prevented) from his closet, and off his knees, into the pulpit. But when he came there, he

gave himself up wholly into the hands of God, to be actuated and used by Him, in all respects, as might be most for His glory. And it was glorious and wonderful to see the good effects which were produced at those times, by the words of God flowing from his lips, and entering into the heart; without, indeed, the ornaments of studied eloquence, but in their native majesty and simplicity; such as they are in themselves, and as he himself relished them. One circumstance relating to his manner was, that he almost always began, and in general concluded, his sermons with a text of Scripture; but so judiciously chosen, as seldom failed to touch the heart, and frequently to cast light on the whole subject.

One might easily gather from his way of preaching, how sensible he was of a mistake, or error, (though perhaps rarely noticed,) in many preachers, who content themselves, supposing there be but demonstration in their sermons, that they have spoken things which cannot be reasonably gainsayed. Whereas, if there be nothing more than clearness of demonstration in a sermon, it may indeed be so far said of the preacher, "Thou preachest well.—But what then? Who is edified to salvation? who are quickened in their pursuit of God and heaven? who hates his sins, or who loves God, the more for your discourse?" Now, where these are not to be found, may not a sinner as well be hearkening to a mathematician demonstrating Euclid's Elements, as to a preacher only proving a point of Christianity?

It was far from satisfying him that his sermons had in them sufficient demonstration. But still retaining in mind what is the true end of preaching, namely, the bringing souls acquainted with, and building them up in, God; he rated his sermons

accordingly : and, for the more effectual promotion of this, he studied to be well acquainted with all the motions and sentiments of the human heart, pointing his discourses there continually ; laying hold, as it were, of its very inmost thoughts, and with the sinner's own weapons slaying the enemies of his salvation. He applied to the conscience at every turn ; and, after having at any time demonstrated a peculiarly interesting truth, of a general nature, he always took care to make it a personal thing, by questioning the heart of everyone concerning their part therein. He frequently introduced, by way of comparison, many of the incidental occurrences in life, things respecting callings, families, and a thousand little matters, by which the great concerns of the soul and another world entered more deeply and sensibly into the minds of the common people. I have heard a woman, of known integrity, say, that intending one evening to have his judgment, after preaching, on several particulars which were a weight to her mind, he so anticipated every objection, and answered them in the sermon, that she, entirely satisfied, needed no further inquiry.

It was very usual with him in his sermons to propose and answer divers cases of conscience ; which was often an inexpressible satisfaction to many. In describing vices, (for which he was eminently remarkable,) he did not so much dwell upon the vice itself abstractedly, as he showed the persons to themselves, who were guilty thereof ; and represented the unavoidable danger of such as lived and died therein. It was not so much " pride, envy, anger, lust, drunkenness, swearing," and the like, which he painted in their deformed and detestable nature ; (though he did this also ;) but his drift at such

times was, to describe the proud, the envious, the angry, and the lustful man; to alarm the drunkard, and the swearer, &c., as with the voice of thunder, to escape for their lives. The most guilty person can sit and hear his vice described, with composure enough; but the conscience of a sinner cannot so easily escape, when the preacher, speaking as it were to one person, (though without particularizing any,) charges it home, "Thou art the man." It was in this way that his sermons were, by the grace of God, effectual to the awakening and converting of so many.

His whole life being one series of holy living and mental improvement, preserved his heart like an ever fresh and overflowing fountain, which on every occasion poured forth its fruitful streams of holy doctrine and persuasive exhortation. It was easy enough to discern that he felt the things he delivered. He gave himself wholly to this one thing; and, which was the crowning glory of all, was himself a pattern of the truths he taught.

"His own example strengthens all his laws;
He is himself the gracious saint he draws."

Indeed this was, first and last, his main concern, that while he ministered to the wants of others, he might not sustain loss in his own soul, nor have to take up that sad complaint, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." (Canticles i. 6.) It is a fearful case for a preacher to be only like a channel in a garden, through which the water runs, to cool and moisten the herbs and flowers, but nothing for its own use; if not like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silkworms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasion

of their own nakedness, if not the cause of their death. This, indeed, is never the intention of God concerning His servants; but men bring it upon themselves, through the abuse of His favours. In this case, perhaps, alas! more frequent than is commonly imagined, what is it but to build a fortune to others upon the ruins of one's own house, while, "after preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a castaway!"

CHAPTER IX.

Of his frequent Sickness, the Exercises of his Mind therein, and the Improvement which he made thereof.

His original constitution was strong, and his make and stature such as, humanly speaking, indicated health and long life. He seemed free from those incumbrances of constitution which some have to struggle with well nigh all their days. His complexion tended rather to the melancholic, than any other, although, from his great fervour of spirit and zeal for God's glory, one would have thought the contrary. But the grace of God is powerful to alter, and even avert, when He pleases, the course of nature. However, the natural temperature of his body seemed well calculated both for the service of God and of his neighbour.

But, in fact, if his bones had been brass and his flesh iron, they must have yielded to the violence which his life and labours offered to his constitution. He enjoyed good health till about the nineteenth

year of his age, which was the year of his conversion to God. But from the twentieth to the twenty-eighth, which was the last year of his sojourning among men, his life may be said to be no other than a lingering death ; as he never was a whole day free from pain or weakness.

A slow fever, and pain at his stomach, were, for the most part, his companions both by day and night. He could in this respect say, literally, "I die daily. I bear in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus." For this his daily martyrdom was brought upon him, and cheerfully endured, wholly for His name's sake. The manner of his preaching, intense study, little rest, and frequent outward fatigues, broke the very frame of his nature, and brought him, in a short time, to such a habit of body as medicines were never after able to remove. An eminent physician once said to him, "Mr. Walsh, I would not use my horse as you use your body." The burning fervour of his spirit in the cause of God, and the deep concern which he continually felt for the salvation of sinners, prevailed over all that either prudence could dictate, or friends and enemies persuade or threaten.

"It is," as he once expressed it, (speaking of his illness,) "in the work of God, in the cause of Christ ! Therefore I rejoice ; for I count not my life dear to myself, if I may but glorify my Lord God, and only Master Jesus Christ." It is really surprising, that, considering his weakness and habitual disorders, he could possibly go through such daily and nightly labours as he did ; nor can it be accounted for otherwise, than that the strength of God was made perfect in his weakness. "Sometimes," says he, "when I begin the labour of love, I am hardly able either to

walk or speak ; but after I have laboured a while, I find new strength, and am even better than when I began !”

As to the use which he always made of his illnesses, it will be best and most satisfactorily gathered from his own words, in which, for the most part, the following accounts and reflections are given. They are related in the order of time in which they occurred.

“ Tuesday, Jan. 18th, 1751.—I preached on Matt. v. 3, but could not finish, being seized with an ague. Immediately I went to bed. I could rest in the will of God, being persuaded it was for the better. True it is, that afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, while they last, though afterwards they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. How great, O my God, are Thy goodness and tender mercies towards me ! If I had a thousand tongues, I could not praise my God as He deserves. He remembers me in the time of my trouble, and leaves not my soul comfortless. Lord, there is nothing good in me, that Thou shouldest regard and so remember me. All is of Thy free grace and undeserved mercy. O the ravishing joy that seizes my heart, in meditating on the dying love of my Saviour ! It raises me above all human things, and carries my soul deep into the mysteries of godliness.”

Yet two things he then especially remarked :—

1st. How sad an affair it is to leave the work of salvation to a time of sickness. “ Experience,” says he, “ has strongly taught me, that if my peace was not made before such an affliction ” (referring to a violent fever, after which he wrote these words) “ as this was, it would never have been made : rather distraction, and almost madness, would take up the

time; and not repentance. Look, O Jesus, upon those who are putting the evil day afar off!"

2d. That before each of his illnesses, he had had remarkable displays of the Divine goodness toward him. Thus he says, "I cannot but remark the exceeding goodness of God; for before my illnesses, for some years past, He always gives me a clear manifestation of His love."

The following account of himself was after a fever, which lasted nine-and-twenty days, at a place called Tyrrel's-Pass, in Ireland:—

"1. I had no joy for twenty days. The severity of my sickness and pain pressed down my soul. Neither Divine light nor love shone into my heart; yet I prayed often with freedom and fervour.

"2. I had no strong temptations, no fear of death or hell; neither had I any desire to die. On the thirteenth day I had an assurance that I should not die in Tyrrel's-Pass. My greatest uneasiness arose from the place where I lay, which was a narrow room, with a shop adjoining, where was hurry and noise almost continually. This circumstance, through the evil of my heart, often became a temptation to impatience. But I cried unto the Lord, and He made everything more easy to me every day.

"3. About the twentieth day, my soul and body much revived. I could, after a night of heaviness and affliction, rejoice in God. I experienced much of the love of Christ. But yet I felt the 'old man.' Alas, what an evil heart have I! How hard is it to humble me, and wean my desires from earth! Lord, Thou knowest my heart and reins. And is it not my desire to love Thee with all my soul, and serve Thee with all my strength?

'Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!'

"4. On the twenty-sixth day, early in the morning, the gracious Lord replenished my soul with His love. He poured out His Spirit upon me. The intercourse was open between heaven and my soul. I loved, and could pray for, all the world, as for myself. O, how does Christ enlarge the heart! What flames of Divine charity does He kindle there! The twenty-seventh day I had such a sense of the mercy of God as quite overcame my soul. In the evening, however, I felt a severe struggle: but the blessed Spirit soon delivered, and set my heart at liberty.

"Lord, since it hath pleased Thee to spare me a little longer, make my life useful. Let me be wholly given up to Thee and Thy service, that I may glorify Thee in all things, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen."

It is easy to discern, as through the general tenor of his life, so especially in those times of sickness, that his main concern respected his "inward man," the state of his heart Godward. He carefully attended to all its motions, and regarded its every alteration; and he as freely owned whatever he found amiss, as he thankfully acknowledged the goodness of God towards him.

Times of sickness, if not abused, are commonly, and they are always intended of God to be, times of much blessing. We want often what sickness, among other things, implies, that is, the necessary retirement of such seasons; which gives us opportunity of calling to remembrance, and, as it were,

recapitulating, our whole life. In the midst of the world's glare, and the hurry of company and employments, it is an easy matter, and very common, to mistake even slavery for freedom, to overlook our follies, and miscall our vices : but,

“ The faults are few we flatter when alone.
A sick bed is a doctor of the heart.”

Then, if ever, persons are obliged to attend to that deliberate reflection, that self-conversation, the want of which is, without doubt, one great cause of the folly and extravagance of mankind in general. We “ know not,” because we “ do not consider.” And how dreadful must the state of that person be, who, being deprived of the life of God, still suffers the crowd of affairs, the noise of his passions, and the delusions of the world, to hinder him from thinking of his present real condition and latter end !
Alas !

“ How must a spirit, late escaped from earth,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves !”

Nothing can be more proper for a person who walks upon the borders of eternity, and is hastening continually to his final audit, than daily to slip away from the circle of amusements, and frequently to relinquish the hurry of business, in order deeply to consider and adjust the things that belong to his peace. And, in order to this, how true is it, that to a mind intent upon its own improvement, solitude, whether of sickness, or voluntarily chosen, has charms incomparably more engaging than the entertainments presented in the theatre, or the honours conferred in the drawing-room !

Indeed, it may justly seem strange, that man who loves nothing like his own person, nevertheless hates nothing so much as being confined to his own conversation. Solitude, with multitudes, is but another name for misery. And the supreme pitch of worldly greatness is too nice and weak to bear the examination of a thought. Most people dread the knowledge of, and love to be entire strangers to, the secrets of their soul.

“Vain man has measured land and sea,
Fathom'd the depths of states and kings,
O'er earth and heaven explored his way;
Yet there are two vast spacious things,
To measure which doth most behove,
Yet few that find them,—sin and love.”

In reality, whatsoever is without us, is foreign to our true happiness, and therefore deserves our esteem only in proportion as it tends to the regulation of our inward man. Our real goods and evils are altogether of an internal nature: and, in the account of God, our greatest blessings are, what a mistaken world often call the greatest misfortunes; such as poverty, sickness, contempt, and the like. To be conversant at home, to take account of the state of our soul, and pursue our measures universally in reference thereto, is, in truth, the prime wisdom of man. But self-love always blinds us in something or other which regards our own persons, and continually opens to us some secret door, to give us means and opportunity to steal away from our own sight, and to make our escape from ourselves.

“O what a riddle of absurdity!
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,

We censure Nature for a span too short ;—
 That span too short we tax as tedious too ;
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,
 To lash the lingering moments into speed,
 And whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves.
 Leisure is pain ; takes off our chariot-wheels.
 Blest leisure is our curse ; like that of Cain,
 It makes us wander, wander earth around,
 To fly that tyrant, Thought. Yet
 A moment we may wish,
 When worlds want wealth to buy.
 O then, for yesterdays to come ! ”

Alas ! to what purpose is it to flee from ourselves, since we cannot possibly avoid either the sight or the justice of God ?

Times of sickness are, likewise, often times of trial and sore temptation. The enemy, taking advantage of the weakened powers of the mind, and other painful circumstances, endeavours to serve himself in our low estate ; at least to embarrass and perplex, if he can do nothing worse. Then, if ever, does he cast in his fiery darts, and often ask, “ Where is now thy God ? ” And so this servant of God found it, in a measure, with respect to both the one and the other ; the blessings and the trials of sickness. What follows may be considered as an instance :—

“ Limerick, October 28th, 1755.—I was seized with a fever, which confined me to my room till Friday, November 7th, and shall remark the following particulars :—

“ 1. I examined myself what might be the cause of this illness, but could not discern anything in particular. I saw, indeed, that many of my tempers, words, and actions were not truly holy. I was ashamed of my best performances. I saw my best

living as a mere blot ; yet the guilt of no particular sin lay upon my conscience.

“2. I was more subject to temptation in this sickness than usual : not indeed to think hard of God, or repine at my illness ; but I had spiritual conflicts, wrestlings against ‘principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places.’ The third day, which was Thursday, October 30th, I had the sorest conflict that ever I felt. I was suddenly seized in body, and amazed in mind. I thought every moment would have been my last. I had a vehement thirst. My tongue was dry and turgid, and my soul was in agony. I was overwhelmed with fear, sorrow, and sore afflictions.

“All the sins of my life passed before me, but especially those which were since I had been enlightened, and since I preached the Gospel. I saw and felt myself hell-deserving ; that I was nothing, and could do no good work before God. I was really poor, in such a manner and degree as I never felt before. I was stripped, humbled, emptied, laid open, confounded, and afraid of God’s judgments ; though not afraid of the devil, or hell. Nay, I all the while knew I had redemption in the blood of Jesus, and that all my sins were forgiven. Who can understand ? Only such as have felt the same.”

How suitable, on this occasion, is that prayer, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord !” Who can stand the test of omniscient purity ? of Him who foibles in archangels sees ! The life of this servant of God was, from the time of his conversion, remarkably fair, without blemish, and one series of endeavour to please his God alone. Yet now, when God, for wise ends, had let him see

what he had been in himself, "laying judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet," how insupportable was the sight!

O Thou bleeding Love! Who can pay Thee praises due? What hast Thou done to become "the Lord our righteousness;" to redeem us from ourselves, and wrath eternal?

"No; our best actions cannot save,
But Thou must purge e'en them;
Yet, since in Thee I now believe,
My worst shall not condemn.

"Whate'er in me seems wise, or good,
Or strong, I here disclaim;
I wash my garments in the blood
Of the atoning Lamb."

"3. In the midst of my troubles, I had liberty in prayer. My understanding and memory remained with me, and abundance of spiritual matter was suggested to my mind. Even passages of Scripture, that I never used before, were brought to me in prayer. I was alarmed in every part, and cried mightily to God. I cried to all about me to pray for me. Surely they saw the bitterness of my soul. God remember them for good who then sympathized with me in my trouble!

"4. It left me gradually, and without any sensible joy. Peace and confidence arose by degrees in my spirit. The very extremity of the combat lasted about a quarter of an hour. It just then occurred to me, that some days before, I heard Jesus, as it were, speak, and say to me, 'Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail.' And now I fully understood it. In so many instances are those words of our Lord true, 'What

I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.'

"5. I felt (and might it not be the design of God in the whole?) that the name of Jesus alone could avail to bring me to God.* I had such a deep

* Frequent mention is made in holy Scripture of receiving all our good things from the Son of God, through His name, as that which performs for us everything we need. That there is salvation in no other:—His name, through faith in His name, hath done so and so. Men are said to be condemned because of not believing in His name; and again, to "have life through His name;" and for His "name's sake" the little children's sins are said to be forgiven them; with much to the same purpose. This is the name Jesus, "a name above every name," and of which the children of God have been ever peculiarly fond. It occurs, I think, not less than four hundred and fifty times in the New Testament. Ignatius spoke of it as though engraved on his inward parts, and not to be erased by death. St. Austin could no longer relish the writings of Cicero, (though he once so admired them,) and for a while wondered what was the cause. But he found it was, that the sweet name of Jesus was not to be found in them: and as Job says, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?" So, a true believer in Jesus can relish nothing, esteeming unsavoury as the white of an egg whatever has not something of Him mingled therewith. In short, with Jesus everything is acceptable to a gracious heart; without Him nothing. It is a heaven to be with Him, a hell to be without Him!

To the true lovers of Jesus, a name which was of necessity so precious to the person before us, one can hardly say too much of Him. I therefore willingly take occasion to subjoin a little extract concerning this precious name:—

"Jehovah hath changed the ineffable name into a name utterable by man, and desirable by all the world; the majesty is all arrayed in robes of mercy; the adorable mystery of the patriarchs was made fit for pronunciation and expression, when it became the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God, clothed with circumstances of familiarity, and opportunities of approaching Him. God could not be received or entertained by men, till He was made

sense of this, as I never had before. I had, besides, extraordinary evidence of the eternal power and

human and sensible, by the adoption of a sensitive nature. Thus was His person made tangible, and His name utterable, and His mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made plain, at the naming 'the holy child Jesus.'

"And then was God's mercy at full sea; then was the time when He made no reserves of His benignity. To patriarchs, and persons of eminent sanctity and employment, in the elder ages of the world, God, according to the degrees of His manifestation, or present purpose, would give them one letter of His ineffable name. For the reward that Abraham had in the change of his name was, that he had the honour done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it; and so had Joshua, when he was a type of Christ, and prince of the Israelitish armies; and when God took away one of these letters, it was a curse.

"But now He communicated all the whole name to this holy Child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that He was the glory of God, the express image of His Father's person, God eternal; and then manifested to the world in His humanity.

'This heaven-assumed majestic robe of earth
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
With azure bright, and clothed the sun in gold.'

"And thus all the world who expected blessedness, and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, found them all, with ample returns, in the name of Jesus.

"This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments. This is the name at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the Divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction. At the mention of this name, the blessed apostles, and many other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of Righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles: 'signs, and wonders, and healings, were done by the name of the holy child Jesus.'

"This is the name which we should engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love

Godhead of Christ Jesus. In all my illnesses this truth has been wonderfully revealed to me, both by the external evidence of holy writ, and the internal evidence of the Holy Spirit. None of the prayers which I made use of, so foiled and drove away Satan, as, 'Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy upon, and save, me from this hour.' Likewise the fifty-third of Isaiah, the twenty-third of Jeremiah, and the sixteenth of St. Matthew, with much of the Revelation, came into my mind: and my prayers were made up chiefly of passages from these places. I cried out, when I thought I should speak no more, and said, 'Lord, I have trusted in Thee, and I believe Thou wilt raise me up at the last day.'

"I had, at the same time, most earnest desires to with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion: it being that name whereby God, and God's mercies, are made present to us, and proportionate objects of our religion and affection."—Now "if any man love not" this name, even "the Lord Jesus Christ,"—O God, what shall become of him! (1 Cor. xvi. 22.)

"This mighty name salvation is,
And keeps our happy souls above;
Delight it brings, and joy, and peace,
And life, and everlasting love:
To me, with this dear name, are given
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven!

"What though a thousand hosts engage,
A thousand worlds, my soul to shake;
I have a shield shall quell their rage,
Shall drive the alien armies back;
Portray'd it bears a bleeding Lamb,
And shows the lovely Jesu's name!"

be made holy. I saw more clearly than ever the nature and necessity of perfect love; and was fully persuaded of the necessity of preaching Christian perfection, and of declaring that all is of grace.

"6. For four or five days after it was over, I had much of the presence of God and of Christ; many Scripture truths revealed to me, and strong assurances that God would spare me a little longer, to preach His Gospel to the ignorant and them that are out of the way, and to help forward the faith of His children.

"I write this account November 8th, 1755, being pretty free from bodily pain; at peace with God and all mankind; desirous, and determined, to live wholly to the glory of God; to be a servant of all, giving my life, time, and strength, with every other talent entrusted to me, to God, and the church, which my dear Jesus purchased with His blood. To Him, with the almighty Father, and eternal Spirit, be ascribed the kingdom, power, and glory, לעולם ועד for ever, and to eternity."

The very day on which he wrote these reflections, and the first of his going out after this illness, it being a day appointed for fasting and prayer, to avert the judgment of God, which seemed impending over these nations; he was taken in a chair to the preaching-house, and preached for a full hour, having (as he expresses it) "a deep sense of the majesty of God, and joyful confidence that He would defend the real Israelites from the impending evil."

The frequent experience which he had of remarkable escapes from confinement, by disorders which threatened him with a sudden removal hence, and these in times of preaching especially, made it a fre-

quent and felt expression with him, "When I am weak, then I am strong."

"When one knows," says he, on another of these occasions, "that God is for him, that he has redemption in the blood of Christ, then, whether he be rich or poor, in sickness or in health, he is happy, and can rejoice. Have I recovered my strength? and am I freely forgiven my former trespasses? Does the Spirit of God dwell in my heart? and can I, by faith, behold a reconciled God, and an interceding Saviour at His right hand? Well, then, welcome sickness, contempt, poverty, and death. If I meet with worldly troubles, it is to make my crown the brighter. If I bear the cross, I shall wear the crown. Is my body cold? I am warmed with the flames of sacred love. Naked? I have a covering of wrought gold, the righteousness of my Saviour. Hungry? I have meat to eat the world knoweth not of; 'the hidden manna, and the bread of life.' Let me suffer then with Christ. Men may kill my body; but it would only send me the sooner to heaven."

The following instance, and which is the last I shall mention on this head, is the rather inserted because in it may be seen a true picture of the man, from the feeling, free pourings out of his own heart. It was at Bristol, after recovering from a dangerous fever.

"For three days last past I had much converse with God, and vehement desires to live wholly to His glory. I have inquired into the reason of my affliction; and think, God did it to humble me, that I should not be puffed up with the praises of the people. They cannot indeed too much admire the truths of God, nor be too thankful to Him for them.

But the danger was, lest I should think myself somebody. Yet I cannot lay to my own charge the desire of applause, neither did I find it lift me up: on the contrary, it often made me ashamed, knowing my own vileness, and how little I either suffered or did for God.

“And truly I was never more sensible of my unprofitableness than I am at this hour. I blush to see and hear how others live, and have lived, and at how low a rate I yet live. But above all, when I consider the life of the holy Jesus, O, how far short do I come! I am not entirely dead to myself. I am not altogether free from affection to creatures. I cannot rejoice equally to suffer, as to be comforted. I speak words I ought not. I spend some minutes unprofitably. In short, I do not love God, or my neighbour, as I ought.

“O, was it not for free grace, and the blood of sprinkling, where should I appear? But Thou knowest my desire, or rather the desire of Thy Spirit within me. Thou knowest that there has never been a saint upon earth whom I do not desire to resemble, in doing and suffering Thy whole will. I would walk with Thee, my God, as Enoch did. I would follow Thee to a land unknown, as Abraham did. I would renounce all for Thee, as did Moses and Paul. I would, as did Stephen, seal Thy truth with my blood.

“Is not this the desire of my soul, O my Saviour? O, give me power; give grace and constancy. For unless Thou helpest, all my longings and praying will prove fruitless. But if Thou waterest these plants of Thine own right hand's planting, this grain shall become a great tree, and my soul shall be swallowed up in Thee, my Lord God!

"Jesus was my comfort, and my joy, my life, and my strength. O, if I had not Jesus for my help, I should be miserable. But since I have Thee, my Lord, I am therefore happy in these my afflictions. The lovely smiles of Thy countenance, which shine with glory, revive and raise me. O Divine love! What hast Thou done for me, a poor sinner? 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!'

"O that my soul was loosened from this body, that I might ascend the holy hill of the Lord! My Jesus, when shall I behold Thee face to face? O that this separate wall was broken down, this partition was but taken away, and that I could even now enter into the celestial courts, there to sing everlasting Hallelujahs to my Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen."

CHAPTER X.

Of his Temptations, Conflicts, and various Exercises of his Soul.

THE proneness which we find in ourselves to extremes, discovers itself perhaps in nothing more than in things pertaining to the kingdom of God. We are apt to allow too much or too little; are for wholly receiving, or wholly rejecting, almost everything; and find that it is one of the hardest matters in the world to keep a proper medium between extremes, indeed of every kind: but we find it peculiarly so, with respect to things that concern the invisible world; the agency of invisible spirits,

whether good or bad. What is more common, on the one hand, than to hear people say, of well nigh every occurrence and alteration in their spirit, "The devil has done this;" "The enemy has brought it upon me;" and the like? Whereas, in reality, the difference which we sometimes feel in ourselves, with regard to the sensations of cheerfulness and depression, alertness and languor, arises from the very contexture of our animal frame, in which the body is more immediately concerned than the soul. And very often it is the Spirit of truth and of purity that reproves us, for something blamable in our spirit or conduct; some instance of omission, unfaithfulness, or actual sin. Cases of Divine visitation are easy enough to be distinguished by such as are truly spiritual.

There are those, on the other hand, who, prone to philosophize almost everything, ascribe most of the occurrences in the world, the difference we find in ourselves, phenomena in nature, to mere natural causes; and so, well nigh exclude invisible beings from having anything to do with the ways of men; living, in this respect, "without God in the world."

It is indeed a point of wisdom, well worthy our pursuit, in order to the true peace of our lives, to know what, in the course of our experience, we ought to ascribe to God, to angels, whether good or evil, and to ourselves. How greatly would it contribute to prevent many evil reasonings and self-tormenting consternations! And it is a point of knowledge to which "the children of the kingdom" are entitled, and do actually attain from God, through the aids of faith and prayer. For so hath the Holy Ghost said, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things:" all things that are

needful to be known, in order to our walking acceptably, and pleasing God in all things.

The following few particulars, in the course of the experience of this man of God, which are ascribed to the agency of the powers of darkness, are (among an infinity of other instances in the world) sufficient proofs of the attempts of those malicious spirits to "steal and to destroy," as saith our Lord; to rob us of the grace of God, and to destroy our souls. Yes,

"From thrones of glory driven,
By flaming vengeance hurl'd,
They throng the air, and darken heaven,
And rule the lower world :
With rage that never ends,
Their hellish arts they try,
Legions of dire malicious fiends,
And spirits enthroned on high."

The following only are here related, to assist, in some measure, our knowledge of Satan's devices; through ignorance of which many souls are often sadly perplexed and hindered in their heavenly journey.

True it is, that temptations and trials of various kinds are a part of the portion of real Christians in this world. And unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but by breaking and polishing, our roughness may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be either for the temple, or the altar,—spiritual building, or holy fire; something that God shall delight in, and then the temptations and the severest trials were not amiss. And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation; no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffec-

tual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing: in every such case the word of promise being, as to St. Paul, (while he was still continued in the war,) "My grace is sufficient for thee."

"It is a great thing" (as he once observed) "to be acquainted with the invisible world. God is always present; but our eyes are closed, and our hearts hardened, till Christ, the true light and life of men, is revealed within us: then, and not before, we have access to the Father; and the Holy Ghost leads us into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."

Concerning the variety of inward exercises and conflicts which he went through, from first to last, he often took notice, that they were greatest on the Lord's day; and says on the occasion, "Lord, I am more afflicted on Thy day than on any other: Thou knowest the cause. If it be the enemy that afflicts me, do Thou rebuke him: let him have no power over my body or soul. And, O, give me Thy meek and long-suffering mind, to bear whatsoever burden Thou permittest to come upon me."

He observes likewise, "When I have most life and power in preaching, then the devil and sin muster all their force, and thrust sore at me. But hitherto God has preserved me, both from the great offence, and from misery and dejection."

The instances of the resistance he found in the time of preaching, from invisible powers, permitted of God to exercise him then, were highly remarkable; and are, perhaps, best accounted for in 2 Cor. xii. 7. He has sometimes started in amaze at horrible injections, concerning God or Christ, or some fundamental article of the Christian religion; even

then, while he has been powerfully asserting, proving, and enforcing it. I have often heard him say, in effect, that there was not a single Divine truth, in the which he was then established, for which he had not fought, resisting as it were unto blood. For he would take nothing upon trust; nor see with the eyes of others. He derived his sentiments from the fountain-head. His best things came from God, in the way of labour and striving.

He has been sometimes deprived of the use of some of his senses during the very time of preaching. Once in particular, May, 1751, in the midst of his discourse, he, in an instant, lost his eye-sight, and fell back in the pulpit, yet retaining, during the whole time, the perfect use of his understanding: he, however, soon recovered, and finished his sermon. He believed, and was not confounded.

"I know the devil hates me," was a frequent saying with him on these occasions: and often, when he has been disturbed in the silence of the night, in ways more than natural, and well knowing the cause, he has, with much confidence, in the name of Jesus, commanded the adversary to be gone, and found it always according to his faith.

Riding one day with a friend, and talking, as he was wont, of the goodness of God, and of the confidence which he found in Him, that He would preserve him unto everlasting life,—“Just then,” says he, “my horse, on a plain place, threw me over his head. As I came to the ground, it was, as it were, sounded in my ears, ‘Will you trust God now?’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘for ever!’ Through the mercy of the Lord, I was not hurt. I saw an enemy had done it. I was thankful, and felt no contrary emotion in my heart!

' With holy indignation fill'd,
 When by the prince of hell withstood,
 Firm I resist, I grasp my shield,
 And quench his fiery darts in blood !
 Having done all, by faith I stand,
 And give the praise, O Lord, to Thee !
 Thy holy arm, Thine own right hand,
 Hath got Thyself the victory ! ' "

One particular, which ought perhaps to be reduced to this head, and which to some, no doubt, will appear singular, was a frequent, painful, and well-nigh distressing apprehension which he sometimes had of dying. The thought of dissolution had always in it something terrible to his nature. And what renders it the more observable is, that it was so even at those times when he could truly triumph in Christ, knowing in whom he had believed, and that he should be with Him for ever. Of this we have the following account from himself:—

“ Saturday, December 1st, 1753.—After preaching, I studied closely till ten. I found infinite sweetness in God ; and much power breathed into my soul after all ‘ the mind of Christ.’ At present I am tempted chiefly with the fear of death. I believe my pardon is sealed by the blood of the covenant. I have no fear of hell ; and yet I am sorely apprehensive of death.” Again:—

“ Monday, 22d.—I was this day, as I have been frequently of late, much perplexed at the thought of dying. I believe my Redeemer liveth, and that I have an interest in His blood ; and yet, notwithstanding, I am sore amazed at the thought of dissolution.”

To a person, indeed, “ at rest in his possessions,” (Ecclus. xli. 1,) one to whom this world is all, and in whom gaiety well nigh forgets it is to die,—it is

not to be wondered at, that death should be the terrible aversion of such.* For, O eternity! thou pleasing dreadful thing,

“At thought of thee, each sublunary wish
Lest go its eager grasp, and drops the world.”

And in the just approaching prospect of this, to know not whither one is going; to take a leap in the dark; to be unacquainted with Him, the knowledge of whom alone disarms Death of his sting, and so smooths our passage to the grave; and this too, perhaps, after the known neglect of blessed opportunities of salvation, resistance of conviction, and, it may be, a violent smothering the light of God within us, intended to lead from the darkness and death of nature to the life and liberty of love: in such a case, how terrible to die! For, alas!

“What is hell?

’Tis nothing, but full knowledge of the truth,
When truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
And calls eternity to do her right.”

That such as even fear God, and, though earnestly seeking Him, yet not having the faith which is the victory; (although, continuing to seek Him aright, they cannot miscarry;) that even these should shudder at the thought of death, is not so much to be wondered at. But that true believers, in whom are found both the witness and the fruit of the

* “To him, alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flattering his sensual pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Doth not himself, when he’s a dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he’s to go!”

COWLEY.

Spirit, as in the case of him before us, should have any uneasy apprehensions at thoughts of putting off this tabernacle, is not a thing so easily accounted for on the maxims of the Gospel. A philosopher, indeed, would say, that "nature is, of necessity, averse to dissolution." But it is the prerogative and glory of faith to triumph over the fears and follies of nature; and, in short, over everything that can happen; to be more than conqueror "through Him that hath loved us." So that, on the whole, although true believers may, through diversity of causes, receive the message of departure with different emotions in the degree of joy, or peace, or resignation; yet, in all of them, it is deeply rooted, that "to die is gain;" that to depart, and to be with Christ, is best of all.

And thus, in reality, it was with this servant of God; so that the uncomfortable apprehensions which he sometimes felt, even till near his end, in regard of dying, must needs be ascribed, chiefly, to the permission of God to Satan to exercise him in this manner; and may be considered as a "thorn in his flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him;" perhaps partly for the easement of other tempted souls; and, with regard to himself, thereby more fully

"To prove him, and illustrate his high worth,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whatever Satan's malice could invent."

MILTON.

He studied deeply the nature of the Christian warfare, and was well practised in the use of its weapons. His thoughts on "the whole armour of God" * were the genuine result of his own experi-

* There is a sermon of his printed under this title.

ence. The combats which he met with, needed not less than the whole ; and he both tried, and proved, that every part thereof is indeed effectual. Something very different from the preceding particulars he relates as follows :—

“Friday, August 2d, 1750.—I talked with one to-day who was sorely tempted (how mysterious !) to kill me ; and for no other reason, than because she was awakened under my preaching, to feel herself a poor lost sinner.” Again :—

“September 16th.—After preaching, a young woman came to me, and said, that some time before, she had brought a knife with her to preaching, intending to kill me ; but was so terrified under the last prayer, that she durst not attempt it. The devil suggested, that if she did but take away my life, the burden which she felt through my preaching would immediately depart. And now, Satan,” adds he, “if thou art not a liar and a murderer, let Christians, yea, heathens, and even thy companions in hell, judge. But, thou old serpent, dost thou not know that the God whom I serve is able to deliver me ? A hair of my head cannot perish without His knowledge and permission. Ah, Satan, the Lord rebuke thee ! ”

I shall conclude this chapter with a few other particulars relating to this head of trials, taken from his own words :—

“This day I was sorely tempted. Satan threw many of his fiery darts at me. I never before felt such agony in resisting what are commonly called blasphemous thoughts. I cried unto the Lord, and He delivered me.”

“In the evening,” (not of the same day,) “I was in great distress. My soul was much weighed

down. I felt grievous horror in my spirit; and yet I was resolved, although the Lord should slay me, to trust in Him. In the very hour that I came to this resolution, my burden was removed, and the Lord gave me to rejoice in spirit."

"This day (April, 1754) I had conversation with some Christian friends concerning temptations, and the general experience of the saints. And however Satan may be permitted to trouble their body or soul, I always believed, that God doth not hide His face, unless to punish us for commission of sin or omission of duty. And the more I meditate upon this subject, the more abundantly I am confirmed in my judgment."

"I had most severe temptations this day. Sore conflicts with the devil." Again:—

"Thursday, 21st.—I had a most miserable night. Some time after I went to bed, I was sorely assaulted of the devil. I attempted to compose myself, but, alas! could not. I was suddenly seized with a weakness and cold sweat. My heart failed me. My soul was afflicted; my spirit was grieved, and sore vexed. The eye of my faith was darkened; the sense of God's love departed; and the anger of the Lord seemed revealed towards me. I could see nothing but thick darkness, and hear nothing but thunderings from Sinai! It seemed to me as though there was a struggle between justice and mercy concerning me. But, although I was in such confusion and perplexity, I saw that mercy got the victory, and triumphed over judgment.

"My strength so failed me, that it seemed as though I had not an hour to live. I rose, however, and dressed myself; but could scarcely pray one word. I cried, 'Mercy, mercy, mercy!' I stretched

myself upon the floor, and could weep only a few tears. I had gone through sore trouble and darkness before this time; but such a night as this I never had before. (And, O my God, may I never see such another!) After being for some time on the floor, I got up, and walked a little about the room; and then threw myself upon my knees. Being a little revived, I went to bed again. During the little while I slept, I had before me the cause of my trouble. I soon got up; and my head was now as water, and my eyes a fountain of tears.

“My confidence returned, so that I could look up, and believe the Lord was mine. I went and preached on Zech. iv. 7: ‘Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.’ And my soul was humbled unto the dust. My praying and preaching was from my very heart and soul. Let it be for ever remembered, to the honour and glory of the great God, and my Saviour Christ, that I was not suffered to be long in this condition. In about half an hour I received some confidence, and in the morning my faith was increased.

“Let it be also remarked, that the Scripture promises were of great comfort to me, particularly Hosea xiv.; 1 John ii. 2, 3. And likewise the words of our Lord to Peter, Luke xvii. 3, 4; for I was sure He would be a great deal more merciful than what He even required of Peter. Moreover, I opened my Bible on these words, Isaiah lx. 19, 20, which were applied with power to my soul; as was also Job xi. 13–19. Glory, honour, praise, worship, and dominion be ascribed unto Thee, O Lord! Ye angels of God, bless Him on my behalf! Let all in heaven, and all

in earth, join to worship the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

The following was some time after :—

"Tuesday, 21st.—I had a sorrowful morning. My soul was in heaviness through manifold temptations. The enemy came upon me in my sleep, and grieved my soul. Although I had joy at night, yet sorrow attended me in the morning. I had intended to have preached on the beatitudes ; but, finding myself full of troubles and temptations, I changed my purpose, and preached from Hebrews iv. 14–16. O my God, must I perish ? Hast Thou brought me thus far, and shall I be cast off ? O, forbid it, Saviour ! Forsake not the work of Thine own hands. Come, and destroy the works of the devil ! My God, my God, do not forsake me ! Thou knowest that sin is hateful to me. Have I not a love to righteousness ? Do not my soul and flesh cry out for the living God ? Am I not willing to go even through the fire, rather than offend Thee ? Why, then, should the enemy prevail against me ?

"Jesus, hast Thou not bought my soul ? Am not I Thine ? O that my head were waters ! O that I could even weep tears of blood ! Lord God, let not Thy lovingkindness depart from me. Where art Thou, Jesus, Thou Son of God ? My great High Priest, where is Thy atoning blood ? Where is He that was tempted in all points like unto me ? Is there no help for me in my God ? Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? O that I could yield my last breath, if nothing else will end the strife ! O, the languishments of my soul for an absent God ! How does my spirit faint within me ! How do I pine ! O Sun of righteousness, arise upon me with healing in Thy wings ! Come, Lord Jesus, O come, and save

me for Thy mercy's sake ! Where are the soundings of thy bowels ? Dost Thou not see my labouring breast ? Is not my pain worse than even strangling ? Return, O Lord ; see my gasping, longing, aching heart. Am I not an object of pity ? Have I not need of Thee ? Now answer me by fire ! Get Thyself the victory ! I want the seal of Thy Spirit, the earnest of my heaven."

The Lord did hear his prayer. I find it therefore added soon after : " O, how plentifully did the Lord pour His love and consolation into my soul ! I am amazed at the goodness and long-suffering of God towards me. And I observe, in general, that after great heaviness and conflicts, come extraordinary joy and consolation. O, may I husband this precious gift of God !"

CHAPTER XI.

His Communion with God.

UNDER this head is comprehended the whole of his conduct and experience, as a Christian, considered in his private capacity. And for this especially we are furnished with the most ample materials, both from the general tenor of his conversation, and from the memorials of himself, contained in his diary.

He truly lived for this one thing. All his actions and employments had this single tendency, and he considered everything else with reference thereto ; making his estimate of the good or evil of every intention, action, exercise, and undertaking, accord-

ing as it tended to promote or hinder this best of pursuits, and noblest enjoyment of the human soul.

“Heaven bade the soul this mortal frame inspire ;
Bade Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
With unprecarious flows of vital joy ;
And, without breathing, man as well might hope
For life, as without piety for peace.”

Without regarding the fondnesses and inclinations of nature, he embraced, or rejected, every occurrence and thing, with a view altogether to the promotion of the holy and happy fellowship of his soul with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

I am aware how much more easy it is to say great things on this head, concerning one's self, or others, than, in so doing, to say nothing but the truth. And it may be questioned, whether the greater part of the shining accounts which some past ages have produced of persons, in reference thereto, are founded in simple truth ; the writers, by their eulogiums, often showing rather what they could say, than discovering what the persons whom they describe really were. It is a fruitless expectation to look for more in men than the state of humanity really admits. Things in practice rarely rise as high as men's speculations upon them. And not knowing, or attending to, “what our mortal state admits,” we are too apt to forget, that

“God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets it proper bounds :
The bliss of man, could pride that blessing find,
Is not to think or act beyond mankind ;
No powers of body or of mind to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.”

POPE.

Everything that exists, whether rational or irrational, animate or inanimate, has a perfection proper to itself: a lily, a sparrow, a blade of grass, an elephant, a worm, a man, an angel, have all a completeness or perfection suited to their different natures, capacities, and uses; and are then perfect, when they arrive to that state which God has provided for each. God alone is absolutely and independently perfect. The perfection of human kind is therefore such a state of mind and body as their nature admits of, and as God has provided for them, in the ocean of His love, and treasures of His grace. And even this has its degrees: there are less, and there are more, perfect Christians. The sum of Christian, scriptural perfection is, that, being saved from all our enemies, (that is, sins, including all wrong tempers, as well as words and actions,) we love God with all the powers of the soul, and serve Him with the whole capacity of both our soul and body. And whoever has attained to this (which whoso denies the possibility of, rejects the counsel and word of God) is a perfect man, according to the Scripture; manifold infirmities, necessarily connected with a dying body, notwithstanding.

This servant of God had his infirmities, properly so called, which often made him weep in secret places. And yet so powerfully did the grace of our Lord work in him, to the destruction of sin; and to such a degree of victory did he attain over himself, the world, and Satan, that to many he seemed more than human; being, in truth, a man of another world, in whom dwelt richly the Spirit of the living God.

To such as were witnesses of his fervent zeal, mighty prayer, steady seriousness, and habitual

heavenly-mindedness, I shall not wonder if all that follows seems far short of a full description of him. And yet I am aware, on the other hand, that to many others it may all have the air of mere ideal flight, or enthusiastic folly,—to persons who, cold themselves, think ardour comes from hell.

“Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is, but what they find at home.”

The deep and genuine acquaintance with God to which he attained was, in truth, beyond that which the generality of Christians arrive at; although all are, without doubt, equally entitled thereto. He truly “put off the old man with his deeds,” and became “renewed in the spirit of his mind.” He fully experienced the significancy of those words, “Sin shall not have dominion over you;” and, “He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;” as also, “Ye are dead; and he that is dead is freed from sin.” And from hence it was that there appeared throughout his whole carriage such fruit unto holiness,—acceptable fruits of righteousness, to the glory of God. In him might be seen how great things God doeth for His children who simply follow Him, even in this world; not less than making them complete before Him in love: that, being perfect and entire, lacking nothing, they might anticipate “that eternal life which is with the Father and the Son;” while

“Meridian evidence puts doubts to flight,
And conqu’ring faith anticipates the skies.
O, wherefore is the Deity so kind?
Astonishing beyond astonishment!
Heaven our reward—for heaven enjoy’d below!”

My first acquaintance with him began soon after the mercy of God had stirred me up to seek His face. From a studious regard to the holy Scriptures, it was soon given me to understand what manner of person a Christian approved of God must be; and thenceforward, I both read, conversed, and thought of little else. And in him I saw clearly, what till then I had only conceived; in him my conceptions were truly exemplified. Much had been reported, both of the gifts and graces with which our Lord had enriched Mr. Walsh; yet, with the utmost truth and soberness it is spoken, I found in him much more than I had either conceived or heard. Nor did the long intimacy with him, with which I was afterwards privileged, alter in the least my sentiments. There is much truth in the observation, that it is dangerous to dip, in most men, below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of our good opinion of them. But it was not so with him: rather, the more thoroughly he was known, the more one could not but admire him; so powerfully did the grace of God work in his soul.

It might perhaps be thought tedious minutely to describe all the particular graces and special exercises which adorned his life. And, indeed, to conceive of the excellencies which appeared in him, they need not be attended to one by one; for neither so could they be fully comprehended. But he "walked before God" in such a manner as abundantly included them all. He was a person of a surprising greatness of soul, for which the whole circumference of created good was far, far too little. He found in God

"That something still, which prompts the' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, nor fear to die."

The love of Jesus filled up in his soul that mighty void this whole creation leaves in human hearts.

His exactness in all those particulars which comprise men's duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves, was such, and so well known, that it would be easy to swell this chapter, by enlarging on each of them, to an enormous size. But, passing over the greater part of them, I shall only point out a few particulars, relating chiefly to his internal state, and more secret carriage towards God, which were within my own certain notice; referring the reader for a larger and more satisfactory picture of him to the following collection from his diary; in which are represented those secret transactions of God upon his soul, to which himself alone could be privy, and in which, I judge, the life of this kind of history consists.

“The private path, the secret acts of men,
If noble, form the noblest of their lives.”

The particulars I premise are,

I. HIS PRAYER.

FROM the earliest dawn of the grace of God in his soul, to which he attended, he was remarkable for constancy and importunity in prayer. He was early a wrestler with God, and prevailed, to the obtaining that eminency in the knowledge of God, for which he was apprehended in Christ, and which is here related in part. The more he got acquainted with Divine things, so much the more did he increase in this soul-enriching exercise. “He that has never prayed can never conceive, and he that has prayed as he ought can never forget, how much is to be gained by prayer.”

Beside the daily, and often public, pouring out of his soul in general intercession, and occasional addresses to God in behalf of needy souls, (groaning under the guilt of sin or body of corruption, or whatever was the cause,) who often came to him for that purpose, he had his own stated times for approaching God in secret; in which it was far from sufficing, barely to present himself, and wait, whether in silence or in discourse, before the Lord. He accounted the work still to do, unless he felt his spirit affected with sentiments suitable to his condition; whether of holy mourning, self-reprehension, recovery, or increase of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, or some establishment in faith, meekness, patience, hope, and love.

“Praying with all prayer” seemed the business of his life; for the doing of which, he waited neither for postures, times, nor places. A heart so disposed rendered holy to him everything of this kind, of which may be said, as of places,

“God attributes to place no sanctity,
 If none be thither brought by men who there
 Frequent, or therein dwell.
 —Doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
 God is as here, and will be found alike
 Present,
 Still following, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, His face
 Express, and of His steps the track divine.”

PARADISE LOST.

Prostrate upon his face, kneeling, standing, walking, eating, in every posture, and in every place and condition, he was a man mighty in prayer. In sleep itself, to my certain knowledge, his soul went on (Cant. v. 2) in groans, and sighs, and tears to God.

His heart, having attained such a habit of tendency to its Lord, could then only give over when it ceased to beat; expressing, by its every motion,

“O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe
My soul in prayer to Him who gave my soul,
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love! by Thee.”

The enjoyment of the Divine sweetness which God imparted to him in secret, and the nearness of access to the Divine Majesty with which he was favoured, were indeed amazing, and much better felt than can be expressed. He has been sometimes, as it were, lost in glorious absence, on his knees, with his face heavenward, and arms clasped round his breast, in such composure that scarcely could one hear him so much as breathe:

“Calm and unruffled as the summer sea,
When not a breath of wind flies o’er its surface.”

His soul seemed absorbed in God, and enjoyed a calmness and transport, which can here be well enough reconciled. From the serenity, and something resembling splendour, which appeared on his countenance, and in all his gestures afterwards, one might easily discover what he had been about. Yes,

“A soul in commerce with her God, is heaven;
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,
The whirl of passions, and the strokes of heart.
Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.”

It was especially towards the conclusion of his Lord’s work that he was favoured with such near fellowship with Him. He approached the throne of

grace with much of the reverential boldness of faith, believing that whatever he asked, he should have the petitions he asked for; the Holy Spirit making intercession in his heart according to the will of God. And to such a degree of confidence in Him did he arrive by this means, that in the greatest straits of his life (and he met with some things which came home to him with the deepest sensibility) he was more than kept up, so that he seemed to fear nothing, even where, to all human apprehension, everything was to be feared. He so abandoned himself to God, in the discharge of his duty, that his very friends were sometimes ready to charge him with being a little rash or imprudent. Although he endeavoured to use his understanding, as far as ever it would go, yet, acting in view of "those things which are not seen," and from motives referring to eternity, he was not, it is true, so attentive to the decorums among men, as mere human prudence would have dictated. And, in reality, it is a truth, which is learned from a series of experience, and confirmed by numberless examples, that whoever would do much for God should take care of being (in a right sense) too wise. There is reason to think, that if the apostles themselves had consulted the directions of bare human reason, they never had undertaken the conversion of the world.

An habitual spirit of mortification served as wings to his prayer. And, perhaps, the want of this is, much more than is commonly thought, a grand cause of that indisposedness to, and weariness in, prayer, which is so generally complained of among Christians; many of whom are, often, even glad of a pretended occasion to avoid the duty. "Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name, till the Spirit

of God, by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know that want of mortification of spirit is the cause of all, at least of many, of our secret and spiritual indispositions. The excellencies of heaven cannot be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the low appetites of the world, and of flesh and blood. Unless our spirit be mortified, we neither love to pray, nor does God love to hear us." We find, all the way through our heavenly journey, that to be "carnally minded," in the least degree, is a proportionable degree of death; and that a mind truly spiritual alone has true life and peace.

"Minds elevate, and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
Full relish of existence undeflower'd."

It is hard to say, positively, which he was most remarkable for, the spirit or the gift of prayer, though it need not be told which he most esteemed. His public character made it right and necessary for him to desire and endeavour after "spiritual gifts." And the eminence to which he arrived therein, in general, is too well known to need a particular relation. To hear him, on some occasions, pour out his soul to God, made one often think, Whence hath a man these things? Such a sluice of Divine oratory ran through the whole of his language, on religious subjects, as is rarely to be met with. His public addresses to God were, commonly, well nigh altogether in the words of the Holy Ghost. It seemed as though he turned the whole Bible into words of adoration, confession, petition, supplication, thanksgiving, and glory; while, at the same time, his expressions glowed with the love of God; and all this, with such ardour, intention, pertinency, and faith, that it has

seemed sometimes (one time in particular was peculiarly noticed) as though the heavens were burst open, and God Himself appeared in the congregation. Something of that, Acts iv. 31, was often conceived while he prayed. But he made no account of this, with regard to the perfection of his own soul. He made it his chief aim to follow after love, and to live in a momentary spirit of watchful prayer.

He has sometimes had very remarkable answers to prayer. One only I shall mention. A number of religious societies, both in England and Ireland, appointed a public fast, for the imploring God to restore to health an eminent servant of the church, who had been some time under languishments of body. Mr. Walsh was then in Dublin, and, pouring out his soul about noon, he spoke aloud, in a manner which showed it not to be of himself, and said, "He shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." And, blessed be God, the event showed the prediction to be of God.

Towards the latter end of his progress, and before his last sickness in particular, his prayer had less of labour in it than formerly; and consisted, for the most part, of a passive receiving the impressions of the Divine Spirit; God acting rather in him, than he acted himself. And so still and recollected did he frequently appear herein, that it was as if God was visible before him, and that he spoke to the Divine Majesty with such nearness of access, and child-like familiarity, as the Scripture expresses by speaking with God "face to face." Indeed, every object and occurrence spoke to him of God: nor could there be wanting to him, at any time or place, incentives to raise his heart in prayer or praise to Him whom his soul loved.

One particular which he learned in the course of his experience was, that although the lights which are received from God in the way of prayer are, of all others, to be most faithfully attended to, yet nevertheless, that one ought not to act upon every appearance of this kind; that the enemy of men's salvation can, and often does, mimic the Spirit of God; and, as an "angel of light," imposes upon the servants of God, by representing as from Him that which is often no other than Satan's illusions or our own imagination: on account of which some persons have, in most ages, been led into grievous mistakes, and improprieties of conduct. He perceived danger with regard to himself from this quarter, and was therefore very sparing in mentioning much of what he often felt. He weighed everything by the word of God; avoided precipitancy of conduct, and making haste; and, at the same time, laboured continually to abandon himself, as it were blindfold, to the teaching of the Spirit of truth and of purity.

II. REDEEMING THE TIME.

IN order to do this the more effectually, his manner was, to draw up a plan in writing (till use made it familiar to him) of the manner in which he judged it most profitable for him to spend the day. He distributed it into certain portions, and assigned to each its particular employment, which he punctually observed; allowing only for occasional interruptions in the business of his profession. Reading the Scriptures, times of stated prayer, and visiting the sick, had the grand places in this division of the day. He could never find any leisure for mere ceremonious visits, or unnecessary conversation of any

kind. Even at meals, and, indeed, in every little incidental matter he had to do with, he ceased not to pursue his main end of living; namely, to get and to do good in his generation.

It was really surprising to see his thriftiness in this particular. He even deprived himself of such indulgences as nature absolutely required, in order to her performing the offices he imposed upon her continually; such, for example, as abstaining from all study immediately after meals; when, notwithstanding he ate exceeding sparingly, more relaxation would have been better for his health: likewise, his not using a sufficient quantity of proper exercise; but most of all, not allowing himself a sufficiency of proper rest, refreshing sleep,—

“Man’s rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supple, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repose.”

He was often up late at study; and his general time of rising was four o’clock, or a little after, sometimes between three and four. He was often urged to take more rest. I remember once to have heard a gentlewoman compassionating the wasting, dying condition of his body, saying, “Sure, Mr. Walsh, you may, at least, lie longer in bed on Sunday morning, when the preaching is not so early.” To which he replied, with his usual zeal and abrupt plainness, “Should a man rob God?” He was commonly up earliest on the Lord’s day, for which he had the highest veneration. He has sometimes said, he thought there was something peculiarly sacred in the very air, and the whole structure of nature, on this day.

During the long intimacy I had with him, I do not remember to have known him spend a minute in discourses about national occurrences, politics, worldly diversions, or anything of that sort. He knew that these were not his affairs, and that his business was one. And the same may be said of what is called free and pleasant conversation. So provident was he of time, and so bent upon the pursuit of that "immense revenue which every moment pays," that, in whatsoever company he was, unless something relative to the one thing needful was read, or discoursed of, he either took out a book, (impolite as it may seem,) or continued in profound silence, save when he answered a question. And if, at any time, anything vain, or tending to levity, was spoken, so as to occasion the least appearance of approbation in his looks or gesture, he severely reprehended himself for it afterwards, and prayed for strength for the time to come.

Persons both studious and religious, who sometimes visited him, and finding him always diligently employed, have afterwards said to me, "What! is he never tired? always at it? Surprising!" No, he was never weary of his work; never had a moment at the mercy of an intruder, to spend unnecessarily; never had any time hanging upon his hands, which he did not know what to do with; and under the weightiest pressures of mind, was never

"Blundering spilt on idleness, for ease."

The ignorant, the indolent, the self-indulgent, and the effeminate, (he has sometimes said, in effect,) all die: how much better is it, although one's life be the sooner ended thereby, to live to some purpose for God and man, than thus to die like fools!

“ Bless’d son of foresight !
 Whose yesterdays look backward with a smile ;
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly,—
 That common, but opprobrious lot ! ”

And yet, notwithstanding all his caution, care, and diligence, he frequently lamented his not improving the time better. “ I do not use every moment to the best purposes,” was a frequent reflection with him against himself. And a truth it is, that,

“ On all-important time, through every age,
 Though much and warm the wise have urged, the man
 Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.”

III. DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE WORLD.

ALTHOUGH it is true that, without this, all pretensions to the character of being religious are vain ; and although what has been said of him already necessarily implies his just contempt of every earthly thing ; yet his eminency therein deserves to be taken particular notice of. His indifferency to this world was such as even bordered upon abhorrency ; and the rather, as he could not but observe, what a gulf to souls it is, and how many are lost for ever through their undue attachment to this life. His heart and treasure were, in truth, in heaven.

“ Bless’d with the scorn of finite good,
 His soul was lighten’d of its load,
 And sought the things above.”

He kept at the utmost distance from what worldly men most ardently court, and earnestly sought what they most abhor. The following descriptive lines, expressive of what is intended on this head, were literally applicable to him :—

"The things eternal I pursue ;
 A happiness beyond the view
 Of those that basely pant
 For things by nature felt and seen ;
 Their honours, wealth, and pleasures mean,
 I neither have nor want.

"No foot of land do I possess,
 No cottage in this wilderness ;
 A poor wayfaring man,
 I lodge awhile in tents below ;
 Or gladly wander to and fro,
 Till I my Canaan gain.

"Nothing on earth I call my own ;
 A stranger, to the world unknown,
 I all their goods despise ;
 I trample on their whole delight,
 And seek a country out of sight,
 A country in the skies."

The vain things, riches, honours, and pleasures of this world, were too poor and inconsiderable for so generous a heart: he showed the greatness of his soul by despising all that was beneath it. He had the most generous contempt of money ; esteeming it (unless to bestow on the poor, or procure a book sometimes) as the pebbles in the street. In truth,

"An empire, in his balance, weigh'd a grain."

He had that reliance on the providence of God, and found a happiness therein, which infinitely surpassed all the enjoyments and treasures of the universe. Yes,—

"His hopes, immortal, blew them by, as dust
 That dims the sight, and shortens the survey,
 Which longs in infinite to lose all bounds!"

IV. RECOLLECTION OF SPIRIT, AND GOVERNMENT
OF HIS THOUGHTS.

HIS carriage, aspect, words, and, indeed, the whole of his behaviour, spoke the solemnity and profound recollection of his soul. Nor can a stranger better conceive of him, in regard to this particular, than by forming to himself an idea of a person returned from the happy dead conversing with men. And it was nearly in this manner that some have expressed their surprise at him. A gentleman said to me one day, with some degree of admiration, "I met Mr. Walsh in the street," (or to this effect,) "and I declare he seemed to me like a person returned from the other world." So emaciated a countenance, such fixedness of thought, and serenity of deportment, as appeared in him, towards the conclusion of his race especially, were indeed surprising in so young a man, and discovered a something very different from the busy ways of men. One needed only to look on him, to perceive that there was something in him more than common. And if, as the son of Sirach says, "a man may be known by his look, and one that has understanding may be perceived by the marking of his countenance;" they must be indeed superficial observers, that could not discern, in his very aspect, the excellencies that dwelt within him. An air of wisdom and piety appeared in him continually. There seemed to be something peculiarly distinguishing in the very features of his countenance. Some have taken him to be little less than forty years of age, at the time he was but about five-and-twenty. But,

“Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long, which answers life’s great end.
The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name;
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methuselahs may die;
O how misdated on their flatt’ring tombs !”

His uniform composure was the rather to be noticed, as his life was not of the recluse, but of the popular kind. He had to do with multitudes ; and, unless on special occasions, was seldom above six hours together out of company. It is true, indeed, he seldom appeared in public, unless to speak of the things of eternity, in some respect or other. But he was so shut in with God, that all places became alike to him ; and he retained the same attention to God in the most thronged streets of London, which he could have had in the most sequestered wilderness. Curious sights, elegant furniture, in shops or houses, magnificent buildings, fine shows, the ringing of bells, firing of guns, with everything of this kind, were no more to him than the chirping of a sparrow, or the buzzing of a fly.

To all which, the constant government which he had over his senses greatly contributed. The difference of tastes, harmony of sounds, and whatever his eyes could behold, were as nothing to him. He was, in this respect, truly crucified to the world, and the world to him. Even in travelling through the most pleasant parts in the country, and in the pleasantest seasons, when the stupendous beauties of the creation, the spacious firmament, the verdure of the country, (nature’s loveliest universal robe,) the music of the groves, and all the joint beauties of nature, might have furnished him with laudable

and delightful contemplation,* yet he seemed insensible to the whole, enjoying a

“Paradise within him, happier far;”

and feeling, what is beautifully described in these lines :—

“With Thee conversing, I forget all times ;
All seasons, and their changes, please alike.”

When he at any time adverted to the works of God in the creation, (and he had a mind capable of the deepest researches,) he was delighted chiefly with the heavens, paved, as it were, with those living fires, the spangled stars. But the use which he made of everything was to get more acquainted with God, and so

“By this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation’s golden steps, to climb to Him !”

He was, in truth, loosed from earth’s enclosure, and from the contracted circle of the sun his heart was

* On such a prospect, how natural it is to reflect,—

“Needs must the power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good ; and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite,
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here,
In all this happiness !

“These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair : Thyself how wondrous then,
Unspeakable ! who sitt’st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power Divine !”

set at large. Christ and the Scriptures, with things pertaining to them, were the only and uniform objects of his attention; and every thing, place, or person, which did not serve to promote, in some degree, his knowledge and love of these, had, with him, the estimate of trivial and insignificant.

And hence it was that the presence of God became so exceeding familiar to him as it was. He could not be content a moment without it. And hereby was he fitted, likewise, for more glorious, and more frequent, Divine communications; of which he had not a few, in the course of his progress. Several times has he been quite lost to himself, and insensible of everything about him, being left in the visions of God. Two instances, in particular, are related in his diary, in which he seemed as though he was out of the body for some time. One day, I remember, going to visit a person who was ill: as soon as he got to the staircase, being in his usual composure, "Did you see that light?" said he, with a sudden low voice. To which I answered partly with a sigh, having seen nothing. He said no more. But it was easy to discern in him, the rest of that day and night, a very peculiar solemnity of soul.

In places of public worship he hardly ever saw anybody, so as to distinguish them; and in every means of grace his grand aim was, to find more of God within him. He waited for this in lively, earnest composure; and thus approaching the Lord's table, in particular, he "ate the flesh, and drank the blood, of the Son of God" indeed. "My heart burned; was in a flame! O, what a fire of Divine love was there!" were the frequent memorials which he left in his diary, after communicating. Those heavenly sweets, which often overflowed his soul at

the altar, spread their inundation over every other part of his holy living. His recollection carried itself into the midst of all his labours, in which he was still preserved without dissipation, notwithstanding their multiplicity, and sometimes intricate nature. It was very usual with him to express what he felt of God by the simile of fire, to which the operations of the Holy Ghost are frequently compared in Scripture. He often felt, in prayer, and preaching, and walking, a kind of scorching within him, from the love of God. And from the abundance of the heart his mouth generally spoke. Words of life and fire issued, as it were, out of his lips, which were no other than the sparks of a burning heart. And, often, he could hardly refrain from expressing the holy raptures of his soul out aloud; as, "O holy God! Glorious Jehovah! Blessed Jesus, Son of the living God!"—He used frequently to stand up, and sing,

"O love, how cheering is Thy ray!
All pain before Thy presence flies!
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er Thy healing beams arise:
O Jesu, nothing may I see,
Nothing hear, feel, or think, but Thee!

"Give to mine eyes refreshing tears;
Give to my heart chaste, hallow'd fires;
Give to my soul, with filial fears,
The love that all heaven's host inspires;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite!"

There was, at first, an eagerness in his spirit, that the success of his labours might be, in some sort, proportionable to his zeal and endeavours; but he in time learned otherwise, and became unanxious on

the head, being taught of God, that, having done his part, he should think no more about the matter; but still go on straight forward, keeping himself in repose with God: in imitation of the angels, who continually watch over the souls which God has given them in charge; but who lose nothing of their tranquillity or happiness, even then when their utmost care is unsuccessful.

Well knowing that confusion of ideas, and desultoriness of thought alone, greatly impairs the orderly state of the "inward man," he took particular care to stop them in the beginning; never allowing his mind to wander he knew not whither. Not, indeed, that he aimed herein at a chain of regular thinking, but rather avoided such impertinences and roving of thought, as prevent a calm composure of soul, and waiting upon God: though his diligence and watchfulness, in this respect, brought his thoughts, at length, into a kind of military discipline, so that he has been known, sometimes, to remain recollected for hours, in such a manner as rendered him, in appearance, motionless, and still, almost, as a statue. In reality, if, as the Platonists say, the soul may be dislodged from the body by thinking, it might have been expected to have fared so with him; for sure never was man more prone to intenseness of thought, and abstraction of ideas.

And from hence, partly, arose that extreme tenderness of conscience which was so remarkable in him, and which gave him a constant holy jealousy over himself, in everything he did; so that not a word, motion, or look could escape him unexamined, or uncensured, if it deserved it; resolving to do better for the time to come. Hence, likewise, it was that he had so very peculiar regard to all his words;

speaking either to the purpose, that is, when occasion required him to speak, or not at all. And yet, notwithstanding his utmost circumspection, he was deeply conscious how far short he still came of that rectitude and entire renovation, becoming a person in fellowship with the God of purity and unspotted holiness.

“On human hearts He bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in heaven’s register enrols,
The rise and progress of each option there:
Sacred to doomsday! That the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of God and men!”

CHAPTER XII.

*Some farther Particulars relating to the Head of his
Communion with God.*

V.

HIS great rule was, to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ, in the most perfect manner he possibly could. The whole tenor of his conduct plainly discovered, that he sought nothing but God. There was in the chastity of his manners a purity next to angelical; and a circumspection in his every step of proceeding which declared, that to him “to live was Christ.” He kept at the utmost distance from sensual indulgences of every kind. His senses were kept under the closest custody, and he examined his conscience almost continually. Nor could it be observed at any time, that he acted otherwise than within the rules of the utmost decency. The constant, lively sense which he had of invisible things was a standing

proof of the purity of his heart. "For a pure heart penetrates heaven and hell."

VI.

HE was a man of tears, and sighs, and groans. He wanted not, indeed, the joy of a good conscience ; and knowing continually in whom he believed, he enjoyed the benefits resulting therefrom. And yet, this notwithstanding, the whole of his Christian pilgrimage was interspersed with much weeping ; (see Acts xx. 19, 31 ; 2 Cor. v. 2, 4 ; Rev. vii. 17, and xxi. 4 ;))

"Sorrowing, yet still in peace."

He seldom had a dry handkerchief a whole day together ; his eyes being, for the most part, in private especially, as opened fountains, and which did not cease to flow in the night season. How often have I known him water his pillow with those briny rivers ! sometimes lamenting his too great estrangement from his Beloved ; sometimes mourning for the mourners ; but oftener than all, he was sick of love, —love to the Crucified !

To some, indeed, there seemed in him something, at least, bordering upon an unyielding austerity of spirit : and so much is true, that, with regard to men and evil angels, he was undaunted, as courageous as a lion, in the cause of God and of a good conscience : yet, in other respects, he was a man of the keenest sensibility and tenderest affections. He was, in the presence of his invisible Observer, pliant as melted wax, and clothed with dove-like meekness. He was often, as it were, deluged in tears, prostrate before the footstool of his Lord's majesty, and overwhelmed with a sense of His glory.

VII.

He was, without affectation, a man of humility; not, indeed, so as to disown, or not to make use of, the gifts and graces with which God had endued him; this would have been to lie against the truth: but, notwithstanding all that he had, yet taking the knowledge whence it came, he esteemed himself as nothing; but was truly diffident of, and heartily despised, himself. And the only use which he made of the superior qualifications which God bestowed upon him, in the use of proper means, was, to consider himself as obliged thereby to devote himself more abundantly to the service of God and of his neighbour. The praises of others served only to abase him at the sight of his own nothingness. "Lord, I am vile! a worm! O, deliver me from this evil man, myself! Thou only art worthy!" were the frequent expressions of his lips and pen. If any person at any time gave him but the smallest hint, by way of reproof, he received it either with silence, or expressions of thankfulness, according to the manner and occasion thereof. And, supposing it to be a matter in which he was really without blame, yet the reproof was not lost upon him. He thereby took occasion to enter more deeply into himself, making the strictest scrutiny into the whole of his tempers and behaviour. He often said to God, on these occasions, "Lord, though Thou knowest I am clear in this matter, yet, alas! how many things are there for the which I stand reprov'd before Thee! My God, I adore Thee in this which Thou hast permitted." He often repeated, as a lesson of instruction to himself, those words of Kempis, "Thou dust, learn to obey. Thou earth and clay, learn to demean

thyself. Thou oughtest to be such a little child, that everybody might trample thee under their feet in the streets."

VIII.

THERE was the utmost steadiness in the whole of his religious conduct. The course of the sun and the seasons are not more regular than were his successive exercises of prayer, meditation, preaching, and study: so that, from knowing how he spent one day, may be gathered his manner of spending whole months or years; allowing only for the difference of circumstances and occasions. Thus it was in things pertaining to God and His service; though, at the same time, his attention to himself, his ease and conveniences, were such, that some have accounted it not less than blameworthy negligence; so truly did he live, not to himself, or the will of man, but to God.

IX.

"THE love of God" was the fountain, whence issued forth those fruitful streams, which rendered his own soul flourishing as the garden of the Lord, and extended their salutary influence all around wherever he came. It was to this he reduced everything. All his things were done in love, and therefore wrought in God. It was a debt he was ever paying, and from which he was never to be discharged.

"Indebted still, its highest rapture burns
Short of his mark, defective, though Divine."

"My God, let me love Thee! Jesus, Son of the living God, Thou knowest that I love Thee! O love

Divine, what hast Thou done ! O that all the world did but know Thee ! How would they then love Thee, Thou 'altogether lovely !' " To this effect he often breathed out the warm emotions of his heart ; so deeply was he penetrated with the love of God his Saviour. He was always exceedingly pleased with, and frequently repeated, those lines,—

" Eternity too short to speak Thy praise,
Or fathom Thy profound of love to man ! "

And again, without regarding their connexion, but overwhelmed with the thought of the dying love of Jesus, he would utter, sometimes abruptly, and with astonishment,

" Sensations new in angel-bosoms rise,
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss."

X.

LASTLY. " By faith I stand," was his concluding point, after all that God had done for him. And it was not unusual with him to say, on the closest examination of all he was, and all he did, " If Christ forsook me but for a moment, I should fall and perish after all." Yes, it was from His fulness he received all his good things, and, with the dependent helplessness of an infant, he had recourse to Him continually for light, and strength, and love ; for everything, in short, which he wanted. He trusted only in His passion, and was inviolably attached to His crucified person. He could be happy only in conversation with Him ; delighted peculiarly in those parts of Scripture which describe and endear Him ; and, from the fulness of his whole soul, repeated often, " God forbid that I should glory, save in the

cross of my Lord Jesus Christ. To Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be the glory, both now and to eternity !”

To sum up this head. He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else in this world ; and, from the desire he had to redeem the time, he employed great part of the night, as well as the day, in prayer, meditation, study, and labouring for the good of his neighbour. He was profoundly serious, and always recollected at home and abroad. He watched over every motion of his soul, keeping his thoughts in subjection to Christ continually. He proposed to himself “ the man Christ Jesus ” as his great model and rule in everything ; imitating Him especially in the purity of his body, and in the chastity of his affections. Walking in deep humility before God, he was patient of reproof, nor ever retorted anything with heat or prejudice. There was a steadiness in his proceedings for God, and in reference to eternity, which not all the powers of earth and hell were able to interrupt. He ate but little, wept much, loved more, received all by faith ; and rarely opened his mouth but about heavenly things.

PART III.

"The spirit walks of every deceased,
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
 'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
 And ask them, what report they bore to heaven;
 And how they might have borne more welcome news.
 Their answers form what men experience call."

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

An Extract from Mr. Thomas Walsh's Diary, relating chiefly to the Experience of his own Soul, in his Course of "Walking with God."

CONCERNING the extract which here follows, it may be premised,—1. That, although there was the utmost uniformity in the whole series of his progress; nevertheless, few persons were so sensible of various alterations in spirit, with respect to the sensations of joy and sorrow, delight in God, and complainings for the want of it; owing, in great measure, to a singular tenderness of conscience, and the close attention which he had to all the movements of his inward man; so that things which some overlook, or entirely disregard, were esteemed by him, with regard to himself at least, as capital defections from the law of perfect liberty and love.

“ He felt an idle thought
As actual wickedness ;
And mourn'd for the minutest fault
In exquisite distress.”

His diary consists of the feelings of his own heart, throughout every part of his Christian race, with scarcely a single hour of the whole omitted. He always wrote down reflections upon himself, as either the pressure or felicity of his soul at that time suggested ; adding any spiritual observation or maxim which his own experience confirmed to him.

2. It will be easily discerned, that the peculiarity of his writing is a certain sententious abruptness ; owing, in part, to the genius of the Hebrew tongue, in which his latter studies wholly terminated : though what most contributed thereto was the rapid flow of his soul on the subjects of which he either spoke or wrote, which raised him above attending to that accuracy which writings, at least of a public nature, require. In many places there is, therefore, a manifest deficiency, both as to words, particles, and stops ; in short, like the writings of the ancients, without period or paragraph, in most places : so that liberty has been necessarily taken to add, retrench, or alter, sometimes a word or sentence, to render the sense intelligible, though still retaining his sense entire.

The inserting the precise date of every day's experience is judged unnecessary. Moreover, the experience of several days, sometimes distant from each other, (though rarely above a week,) are thrown into the same paragraph for the sake of brevity. The series of particulars, as to the order of time, are

related as they occurred; and every paragraph begins with the experience of a distant day.

The reader being advertised of these particulars, we proceed to the extract itself:—

“At the close of this last day of the year,” (1750, the year in which he began to preach,) “I examined myself how I had lived the past year; and could only say, I had not wickedly departed from my God: but was heartily ashamed that I had not glorified Him better, resolving to watch for the time to come.

“I prayed to God for quietness and humility of mind; and found assistance against ‘this evil man, myself.’ O for a heart constantly fixed on God! I was reproved this day in spirit for an idle word.

“The Lord was with me all this day. I desire to be with the Lord continually, that my communion may be stronger with Jesus than ever. O, it is heaven upon earth to have Christ in one’s heart! It is the beginning of the glory of God to receive the lovely Jesus; and with Him the joy of the Holy Ghost. O that I had the tongue of an angel, to praise my Lord! Hasten, Lord, the glad hour, when I shall see Thee as Thou art.

‘When shall that long-expected hour
Of sacred vision be,
When my ascending soul shall make
A near approach to Thee!’

“I preached this morning on the great and precious promises, Ezekiel xxxvi. My soul aspired to have them accomplished; for I feel the evil of my nature, and especially the evil heart of unbelief that is within me.

“Friday, February 22d.—I preached this morning

on Solomon's Song, ii. 8; but was both dark and weak, having scarcely any power to explain anything. O, what a grief it is for one to preach, when he is left to himself; when the Lord is not his present strength and teacher! to preach consolation to others, and feel none himself! This exposes one to great temptation.

"Saturday, 23d.—My soul enjoyed sweet repose in the blood of the Lamb, while my heart was engaged in meditation on His dying love. O, where can we find an instance of such love as that of God to men on Calvary! when the innocent died for a guilty world to bring them to God!

'What are all mysteries to love like this!
Should man more execrate, or boast, the guilt
Which roused such vengeance? which such love inflamed?
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!
A mystery no less to gods than men!'

"Wednesday, 27th.—I was not alive to God to-day. Unnecessary talk brought deadness upon my soul.

"Great part of this day I lived as in heaven. Heaven was within me. God was in my soul. The influences of His Spirit wrought so powerfully upon me, that my joy was beyond expression. O the length, and breadth, and height of the love of God! Well may it be said to pass knowledge. The spiritual man may discern it, but cannot set it forth in the manner he feels it. Those words of Isaiah, lxi. 10, lifted up my soul, as in a fiery chariot, above the fabric of this world: 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,

as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.' I could say, that the Lord had so done for my soul. O, what enemies are the children of men to their own souls! They deprive themselves of happiness here, and of eternal glory hereafter; imagining that earthly enjoyments are above what religion can afford. But, alas! it is because they know not this religion, which brings such happiness to the soul.

'They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power;
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
To beings of sublime immortal make,
How shocking is all joy, whose end is sure!'

"O, how sweet was Jesus to my soul! The rose for sweetness, the lily for whiteness, the apple-tree for fruitfulness; what are they all to Thee? Entering into my closet, the moment I bowed my knee the Lord poured down a blessing into my soul. O, what a heaven upon earth did I experience for some moments! Tongue cannot express the goodness of God to my soul. O, where shall I find words to praise? How am I lost in the ocean of the immensity of Thy mercy! Lord, I know not how to give Thee thanks. Where to begin I cannot tell. O my soul, fall into silent amazement. Let all I have, or am, drop into nothing!

"March 8th, Friday.—This was a day of much temptation; but God, for my support and confirmation, was pleased to give me a fresh manifestation of His love.

"Reading and prayer to-day were of little comfort to me. If it were not that I find the abiding witness of the Spirit in my soul, my bondage would be very great. It is the goodness of God which preserves

me in the faith. The enemies of my salvation are thrusting sore at me from day to day. Defend and keep me, O my God, for Jesu's sake.

"In prayer, I saw the great difficulty of being a Christian in reality. There are many who 'eat their own bread, and wear their own apparel,' (Isaiah iv. 1,) and are willing 'to be called by the name of Jesus,' to take away their reproach,—the abomination of being called heathen. But they love, notwithstanding, the ways of death and darkness, rather than light; and do what heathens would not do. The ninety-first Psalm was made a great blessing to me; the ninth verse especially.

"This morning the Lord gave me language that I knew not of, raising my soul to Him in a wonderful manner. After preaching, however, in the evening, at my return to my room, I felt no life in my soul, but a spirit of slothfulness. O, what a poor creature! How incapable of thinking a good thought, or doing a truly good action! Sinful dust and ashes!

"Friday, 22d.—In the morning I had an earnest desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I wanted to see Jesus, who bore and suffered so much for me.

"Monday, 25th.—My soul was very dull. I had a desire to pray, but could not, through the deadness of my heart, and wandering of my thoughts. This is a thing I have to complain of, in general; namely, wandering in prayer, want of earnestness and fervour.

"Tuesday, 26th.—I cannot say that, till three o'clock, I had true communion with God; but then the Lord clearly manifested Himself to me.

1751. April 6th.—I had not much of the presence

of God, nor of the comfort of the Holy Ghost; yet my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God!

“O, what an aversion I had this morning to study, and following the Lamb! If it were not for the promises which the Gospel affords, I should be often brought into bondage. Very often is my soul cast down, and my spirit disquieted within me; so that I must needs utterly faint, if it was not that I firmly hope I shall yet praise God for the health of His countenance. I felt neither comfort nor power in preaching. O, what a poor creature am I, when left to myself! how dark of conception! how slow of heart and speech! It sometimes happens, that while I am thus writing down my condition, the Lord appears to my help: so it is now; for God has been pleased to manifest Himself to me! And, O, what a welcome guest! At His coming, my reins and my heart rejoice; my troubles are done away; my soul is greatly refreshed, my faith strengthened, my hope confirmed, and my love increased. Glory be to God most high!

“God and His ways were sweet to my soul this morning. Great was the peace of my mind, and the joy which arose from considering what the Lord had done for my soul. O, how did I long to be altogether like Him, in righteousness and true holiness! Throughout the day I enjoyed sweet repose in the blood of the Lamb. In the evening I preached on 1 Cor. i. 30. And God did indeed pour of His gracious Spirit into my soul. Truly we had a heaven upon earth! O that I had the tongue of an angel, to glorify Thee for all Thy benefits!

“Thursday, May 23d.—I was in great trouble, going to preaching this morning. My temptations were sore, and my trials exceeding great; occasioned

partly by the condition of some, who for a time ran well, but are turned again to the fleshpots of Egypt. While I preached, however, on Psalm xxiii. 1, my Shepherd gave me to feed upon His 'hidden manna.'

"I found it hard work to be wholly set apart for God this day. I preached comfort to others, but could lay hold on little of it myself. I am often like a day in spring, the sun shining bright for a little while, and soon withdrawing again. The 'Sun of Righteousness' often shines upon me with His bright beams; but, alas! the light is soon clouded, and the joy vanishes away. Yet still, blessed be God! my heart stands fast, believing in the Lord. For I take it for granted, that the want of strong light and joy no more argues want of faith, than the absence of unclouded day argues no sun in the firmament.

"An unusual fondness for company brought deadness upon my soul. The vanities of the world importunately intruded upon me. If God were not on my side, I should have been long ago 'as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah.' Such vanities crowded in upon me at prayer, that even I forgot what I was saying. I am a man sorely distressed with the wandering of my heart. I arose from prayer, and read, and prayed again. The Lord at length met me, and instantly released me from my sorrow, and gave me power to wait upon Him without distraction.

"Saturday, June 12th.—Great was the comfort which I had in God. I had the full assurance of faith, that God was my God, and Christ my Saviour. O the happiness of knowing this!

"Friday, 17th.—The Lord was in all my thoughts: I had not felt so much comfort for three

days. I had communion with God all the day, though chiefly in the evening.

"Tuesday, 28th.—I was deeply convinced of my depravity. O my God, I see the impurity of my heart in such a manner as frightens me. I know that Christ can have no communion with Belial, neither righteousness with unrighteousness. Lord, break not the 'bruised reed,' nor quench the 'smoking flax.' Rather send down Thy Holy Spirit, and set me free from the power of indwelling sin. Consume it, O God! Cast out the spirit of uncleanness, for Christ's sake.

"This afternoon I walked in the fields, and had a sweet meeting with my Lord. He gave me His love.

"Sunday morning.—I was so stupid, that I could scarcely pray. Wandering thoughts crowded in upon me. O for a heart to pray! I find, in general, that, under the most afflictive trials, when I can in fervent prayer pour out my soul before the Lord, He gives me instant relief. But when I cannot pray, O then is my life burdensome to me; I cannot bear myself.

"The word, this morning, was sweet to the souls of the people. They seemed to drink of the fountain of the water of life. I had a glorious manifestation of the love of God to my soul. My delight surely is in the Lord, and His Son Jesus Christ. Thou art my God, my love, my joy, my help, my health, and my all in all! Blessed be Thy name. Amen.

"Too much given to talk. I had not the usual longing after prayer and meditation. Yet the Lord helps my infirmity.

"I had great joy in my soul, and longing desires to be with Christ. O that even now I could behold His lovely face and amiable countenance!

“Friday, July 9th.—I had a lively sense of the Lord’s having blotted out my former transgressions ; and that He had promised to give me ‘a pure and a clean heart.’ I had great peace, my soul being filled with the love of God.

“Saturday, 10th.—I was exercised this morning by false accusations. My only concern was, lest it should hinder the work of God. But in the consideration of His overruling power and providence, I rested patiently on His will. My Jesus was made perfect through sufferings. O that I may be enabled to follow my Master in the way of the cross !

“Walking in a garden this day, God made it an Eden to my soul ; pouring His love into my heart. I partook of the water and the tree of life ; and the hidden manna was rained from heaven into my soul.

“Monday, 19th.—All the day my soul thirsted for the living God. It was transported, and exceedingly rejoiced, in reading some Divine meditations. O my God, what shall I say ? Angels cannot praise Thee worthily. What then shall I, who am a worm of the earth, do ? O that I had wings like a dove ! Lovely Jesus, when shall I see Thy face, joining the rest of the redeemed to celebrate the wonders of Thy redeeming love ! O that this were the moment ! My soul shall, ere long, take its flight to the mansions which I firmly believe my Saviour is preparing for me. O my God, my Saviour, my all !

“Thursday, 25th.—I had but little light or power. The Lord humbled, and showed me my own weakness ; but did not leave me to it. He showed me clearly, that it was neither to my graces, humblings, desires, doings, nor sufferings, I must trust for happiness and salvation, but in Christ alone.

“Ah, Lord, who is sufficient for these things ? O,

let me die, that I may see Thee! Whither is my Beloved gone? Return, Lord, return! I am a feeble and helpless creature. Yet rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! for though I fall into temptations, heaviness, and trials, I shall rise again. O proud Philistines, deceitful Delilahs, inbred sin, pride of heart, anger, and folly, who can remove you? Lord Jesu, Thou canst, and Thou alone.

“At the sacrament, O, how did my soul banquet in Jesus! What Divine consolation did I feel in God my Saviour!

“Wednesday, 23d.—I was tempted to laugh on my very knees. O Lord my God, be my Rock. Hide me in Thy wounds, and deliver me from myself. O Jesus, I cry out of the deeps: hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before Thee.

“Sure I am, that if my salvation depend on aught but the changeless love of God my Saviour, I never should see the Lord. Alas! I am all weakness, unbelief, disobedience, and darkness. My soul was weighed down with inbred sin. But I no sooner began to complain, and bewail myself before Him, than He poured His love upon me, and gave me sweet access to Him.

“1752. January 6th.—I could hardly account to myself how my thoughts had been employed this day. O that they were every moment taken up in the contemplation of Thy wondrous love and compassion to me, and all the fallen race! O for an humble, lowly, simple, pure, and perfect mind! What shall I say to Thee, Thou delight of my heart? How much fairer art Thou than the sons of men!

“When I look back upon my life, I can see nothing that does not need to be washed with the

blood of Christ. My best actions are imperfect. I have need to fly to my Saviour, that from Him I might receive that robe which is pure and complete. My whole desire is to be devoted to Thee.

"Ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven, I fell down before the Lord my Maker: and I may well say that He waited to be gracious; for before I could utter many words, His love filled my heart. I could then look up with confidence, and see my Father, God, smile upon me, and my dear Redeemer at His right hand, full of grace and truth for me. O, how sweetly did the ever-blessed Trinity join to bless me! Help me to praise Thee, O Thou strength of Israel!

"This morning, at breakfast, the Lord left such a Divine impression upon my heart, as, I think, will never wear off.

"God was much with me in private. O, what a heaven upon earth is it to commune with Him in prayer, holy reading, and Divine meditation! Jesus is a well of life. How blessed is it to hold intimacy with Him! This is paradise indeed.

"Sunday.—It was a glorious Sabbath to my soul. The light of heaven shone upon me.

"Part of this day was the happiest I ever yet saw. I could freely depart to be with Him whom my soul loveth. Truly I seemed to antedate the sweetness of the celestial felicity which the glorified spirits enjoy above! My song was praises to my God.

"I had calm repose in God. It was a day of sore temptation. I was kept, but through momentary watching unto prayer. O, what am I? How weak, how blind, how poor! As to strength, a bruised reed; for love and zeal, as the smoking flax. But Thou, O God, art strong, and in Thee is my hope.

"I was ill in body, dark in mind, dead in affec-

tions, and sorely troubled with temptations. Yet I was preserved from inclining to iniquity with my heart.

“Sunday.—My soul agonized to enter into the rest of the people of God. I saw Him by faith, and the promises were strongly brought to my remembrance; especially, ‘Ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.’

“Friday, 20th.—I was surrounded with various temptations. O the levity of my spirit, weakness of my faith, and deceitfulness of my heart!

“Saturday, 30th.—My soul tasted of the sweets of paradise this day.

“1753. March 7th.—In the morning there was open free intercourse between God and my soul, which for some hours remained undisturbed. About noon I felt sore war between nature and grace, so that I was brought low. Nature would have me manage for myself; grace was for casting all my care upon God. O Thou Author of every good gift, send me help from Thy holy place, to subdue the old man! Take away the perverseness of my own natural will, and make me lowly and patient as Thou, my Lord, art. Thou art the source of grace and of goodness. In Thee, O Lamb of God, is all I want.

“Thursday, 8th.—I poured out my soul before the Lord, who gave me to feel hearty contrition, with earnest desires to be sanctified wholly. For

‘O how wavering is my mind,
Toss’d about with every wind!
O how quickly doth my heart
From the living God depart!’

Son of God, set me free, and knit my soul to Thyself!

"Saturday, 10th.—The Lord sweetly refreshed my spirit. I was strongly moved to pour out my soul for my enemies, and all that forget God. There was a burning in my heart after all the life of God. Nothing appeared so desirable as holiness. O God, take the whole capacity of my soul, and possess it by Thy Spirit.

"Sunday, 25th.—I have a proof to-day of the vanity and uncertainty of human friendship. Some who loved and greatly esteemed me when I left Dublin, about ten weeks ago, will now, at my return, hardly speak to me. O that I may seek friendship, and all good, in God alone! Yes,—

'For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow here.'

"Some words I heard this morning pierced me to the very soul. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord. I fly to Jesus, the 'just One,' to hide me in His wounds. He is my sanctuary, the ark of the covenant, and the true altar. Come, my life, my treasure, and my God, shine into this drooping heart. Have I not an interest in Thy blood? Am not I a child of Thine, O God? Hast Thou not said unto me, Live? O that Thy powerful voice would now speak to my soul, and bless me, O my Father!

"How little do I know of God, or of myself? O, what a mystery is man! How difficult to find, and then to lose himself! Lord, I long to be settled and fixed in Thee. O, how does this mortal body press down the soul!

"Saturday, April 21st.—I was strengthened in the hope of full redemption. Jesus, forsake me not; or I shall be of all men most miserable!

“Wednesday, May 4th.—I woke with the presence of God. Jesus was amiable, and altogether lovely to my soul. My heart was carried out in praise to Him for redeeming me, and making me His own for ever, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

“I earnestly longed after inward holiness; the image of God brought into my soul: for then only shall I be truly happy, when self-love, self-will, and all other roots of bitterness, are rooted out of my heart, and the pure love of God overflows my whole soul. When Jesus is the supreme and sole Governor, and all things within are subdued by His grace, then the heart rests in peace, and all things move in their proper time and manner. The soul is retired, though in the midst of hurry, and sweet peace and joy flow from Jehovah, their source. This is the victory, the salvation, the liberty, the deliverance from sin, which very few believe, and which no one can know, save he that receiveth it. But it is the privilege of the children of God; and every one who sincerely seeks, and with all his might strives for it, shall surely attain, by the Spirit of the Lord; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

“At the Lord’s table, the bloody sacrifice was impressed on my heart. The fruit of the tree of life was sweeter to me than honey and the honey-comb.

“Friday, 31st.—After preaching, I gave myself to my usual study. O freedom of heart, and contempt of the world, how great blessings are ye! Plentifully did the Lord shower His love into my soul this day, in our public meeting. Verily Thou art the pleasure of my soul, the hope and desire of my heart.

“This day God prepared me for a sore trial, by giving me sweet repose in His love. I lived, as it

were in heaven. My soul was ravished with His sweetness. So was I enabled to bear, with calmness and patience, the abusive language of one who came to my room, breathing out threatenings against me. Alas! how many are there who are great friends in profession, but not such in reality!

“O the unspeakable comfort of having an assurance of the love of God!

“Saturday.—I was very happy in my soul, and read God’s holy word with great delight.

“I cried unto the Lord, to make me ‘holy as He is holy.’ This is the thing which I long for. Lord, grant me my heart’s desire. Answer Thy Spirit’s cry for liberty.

“Saturday, August 29th.—In the night I was grievously tempted of the devil. He injected such blasphemies, and threw such fiery darts, as I never experienced before. I was sore amazed, and cried unto the Lord Jesus. He heard my cry, bruised his head, and delivered my soul from his rage and fury. Lord, Thou upholdest me, or I should fall. O, stay with me, till I arrive safe in Thy kingdom!

“Sunday, September 1st, was a day of feasting and rejoicing to my soul. I had sweet converse with my Beloved, while I joyed in His salvation. I proclaimed His name to thousands, from Jeremiah vi. 10; and never felt more freedom to preach my Saviour. O my Lord, Thou art precious to my soul, and Thy service is my reward!

“1754. Sunday, March 3d.—At the Lord’s supper this morning, my soul was dissolved with Divine love. I could bless God that ever I was born to so happy and glorious an end, as to love, and praise, and serve my Redeemer. Yes, Jesus, Thou art precious to my soul. Thy yoke is easy, and Thy

commandments holy, and just, and good. I desire to keep them with my whole heart.

“The more I see of the world, the less happiness I can discern in it. Happy are they who are well out of it. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. It is a great thing to be a Christian in truth.

‘There’s not a day, but to the man of thought
Betrays some secret, that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.’

“I used the means of grace to-day as usual, but cannot say that I had communion with God in them. Alas! what are means, when Christ is absent? How often do I find heaviness and deadness succeed much joy and freedom of spirit! ‘Poor, alas! beyond expression poor!’

“I wept and rejoiced that God had given me a soul capable of loving Him. In reading and meditating in the open air, my soul tasted of the joys, in part, which those spirits enjoy who behold His face continually.

“My soul vehemently groaned and longed for full redemption, while it enjoyed sweet converse with my Lord Jesus.

“I removed from amongst us some who walked disorderly. Alas! how few are willing to do and suffer all the will of God!

“Tuesday, 12th.—Although my body was much afflicted, my soul was greatly comforted.

“Sunday, 17th.—I heard a sermon to-day at church, in which my Lord Jesus was not so much as named. Alas! that ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ should be entirely forgotten!

“Friday, 22d.—I was heavy and ill all the day; yet I strove to do the will of my heavenly Father.

"Saturday, 23d.—I had intercourse with heaven all the day. I thirsted for the salvation of all men, as for my own soul. I was also deeply humbled before the Lord, seeing myself the most vile and unworthy of all His creatures. He likewise made me willing to be despised and evil spoken of by others. And I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of God, in so preparing me for what soon after followed. One of my acquaintance, that went with me to the house of God, laid to my charge things which I knew not. I sent for him; but he could say nothing to my face. His mouth was stopped, and he seemed quite ashamed. I felt much patience and pity towards him. Lord Jesus, give him repentance, and take prejudice out of his heart.

"Saturday, April 20th, was a day of joy and sorrow by intervals. O, how did nature and grace strive in my soul! What conflicts with myself do I daily experience!

"Friday, May 3d.—I had a feeling sense of the treasures of grace and glory, which are laid up for me, both here and in heaven. O, what a heaven did I experience in being able to call God 'my God, and my Father!'"

CHAPTER II.

The Extract from his Diary continued.

THE account of his experience, given in the preceding chapter, begins with the first year of his conversion; in which likewise he began to labour for the good of his neighbour. And it may be observed

that, in his progress, the experience of his heart had its certain progressive stages, resembling, in some degree, that of the "shining light," or sun. A day, suppose, whose early dawn is clear and promising, and whose light and heat still increase, ere long is overcast with clouds, and disturbed with tempests; the sun, however, keeps his course, and still goes on to the "perfect day." Such, likewise, is "the path of the just:" and such was the experience of this servant of God.

The first display of the Divine goodness to his soul, in justification, was so clear, and his joy thereupon was so strong, that he had then no expectation of seeing war any more. And he was, indeed, carried on sweetly for some considerable time.

"The heavens distill'd their sweetnesses,
And strew'd with flowers his way;
Some tastes he had of paradise,
His every joyous month was May!"

But, whatever was the cause, or whether there was, according to the Divine disposals, a *needs be* for it; however, so it was, that he afterwards felt otherwise, and that chiefly

"Commenced now the agonizing strife,
Previous to nature's death, and second life."

And hence we find him often groaning under a body of sin and death; complaining of struggles between nature and grace, and of inconstancy and weakness in general; with ardent pourings out of his soul to God for complete deliverance. And his thirst after it was considerably augmented by the transient tastes, with which it pleased God to favour him from

time to time, of the heaven of loving Him alone, with all the powers of his soul.

The feeling of his heart in reference thereto, the methods which he pursued in order to attain it, and the progress which, by the grace of God, he made therein, are the subject of this chapter. Only for the sake of some, who desire to have the fullest information concerning him on this head, I shall prefix a letter he sent me to Bristol, from London, in answer to some inquiries which I made concerning his then state of soul, occasioned by the following circumstance:—Some months before he left London the last time, a report prevailed amongst his brethren, (it seems, from some things he spoke chiefly in his preaching,) that he professed to be “cleansed from all sin.” When I parted with him, not many weeks before, I knew he was earnestly following after “perfect love,” weeping and praying almost day and night. And, on my hearing that he had attained, I wrote to know it from himself. To which inquiry he sent me the following answer, concerning the state of his soul:—

“LONDON, *June 17th*, 1757.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“WHAT you mention concerning me, I answer thus. 1st, I feel the constant witness of the Spirit of God, that I am forgiven, and that I love God and my neighbour. 2dly, I do not feel any evil tempers. 3dly, I firmly believe that God will eternally save my soul. But whether all sin is taken out of my heart, and the possibility of grieving the Spirit of God, I do not determine; neither do I think, that I love either God or my neighbour as I ought, or as I shall. I am helpless, but God is my strength. I

live by faith. I am ashamed. I have no wish that anyone should believe I am saved from all sin. Indeed, I ought to justify everyone that believes the contrary, supposing it was so. But, alas ! if Christ did not pray for me, and keep me every moment, I should go to the devil. I understand Gal. iii. 10 as I never did before ; and Gal. ii. 19 is what I feel. Jesus Christ is all in all.

“ I have written simply : make the best use you can of it. But say nothing of it to anyone. This I request.* O, let me be forgotten : not of God, or of His children in prayer ; but, as I desire no good to be said of me, I would not have anyone sin against God, in thinking or speaking the evil which my heart abhors. It is much to the glory of God, to save a proud, angry, self-willed, fearful, and unbelieving sinner : therefore I almost say, that I glory in mine infirmities, that the strength and grace of Christ may rest upon me, and save me from them all ; and this He will do as sure as He is faithful and true. I would not have Mr. — to mention anything about me ; but as Providence permitted it, I am not concerned, leaving myself, and the event of all, with God.

“ I expect to hear from you quickly. I am

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ THOMAS WALSH.”

His struggles, sentiments, and attainments, partly before and partly after this letter, even to his death, are farther represented in the following extracts :—

* And his request was then carefully observed. The present case and occasion will, perhaps, be thought reason sufficient for publishing it.

“London, Sunday, June 2d.—All this forenoon I was raised above myself, and lost in God. Heaven, as it were, came down into my soul, and I saw the glory of the world to come! I beheld all the glory of this world as the mire in the streets. But, O! the views which I had of heaven, and the foretaste of those ravishing joys that flow there, so transported my soul, that I could bless God that ever I was born.

“Tuesday, 4th.—My soul was transported this day to such a degree, as greatly affected even my body. I do not recollect that I ever before felt such a sense of the presence of God. Surely, if He should manifest Himself a few degrees more to me, I could not live in the body.

“Sunday, 9th.—I gave myself up to God. I heartily desire to give my whole heart, cheerfully and without reserve, to Thee, my Lord! Many things would alienate it from Thee. But, O my Saviour, keep Thou my every desire. Knit me closely to Thyself, and suffer no false fire to abide in my heart. I acknowledge, O my God, that it is an amazing instance of Thy love, that Thou hast made me a child of Thine. Let, I beseech Thee, Thy goodness be the strongest tie to keep my heart stayed upon Thee.

“Tuesday, 18th.—I was so low in body, that I could hardly speak or think. O, how does this corruptible body press down my soul! Yet I can praise God for His dispensations towards me. He afflicts me, that I may be partaker of His holiness.

“At the Lord’s table I was in an agony for holiness. My soul, and even my body, were ready to faint with desire, and longed for all the mind that was in Christ Jesus.

‘ With me I know, I feel, Thou art;
But this cannot suffice,
Unless Thou plantest in my heart
A constant paradise !’

“ Saturday, July 20th.—O, how my soul laboured with God in secret prayer !—I said in my heart, ‘ If I am indeed a child of God, why have I not greater desires to depart, and be with Christ ?’ I prostrated myself before the throne of grace, and cried to God to answer me as by fire : and He soon silenced my despondencies by answering in my heart, ‘ My son, thou art Mine.’

“ Wednesday, September 21st.—I longed to be dissolved, and yet more to be made holy.

“ God overpowered my whole frame, so that my body fainted under the pouring out of the Spirit of Christ.

“ Saturday, September 26th.—My heart was quite melted with a sense of the goodness of God, and of my own vileness. I think I now begin to repent ; to have a godly sorrow for my sins. Of this I am well assured, that thoughts which were in my mind a year ago, are now a grief to me : the Spirit of God brings the sins of my whole life to my remembrance.* I read them all, but more especially whatever has been wrong in me since I was converted. My spirit within me mourns, and my heart feelingly says, ‘ O that I had never sinned ! O that my soul and body had been always pure before Thee ! O that I had always the same light and power that God has given me now !’ But, although I am vile, yet this, blessed be God, I know, there is now no condemnation to

* “ True believers are humbled all their lifetime, even for the sins which they committed before they were converted.”

me: the blood of Christ hath washed away all my sins. I have the Spirit of adoption, and the peace of my God. I love Him, and all His dear children; yea, and my enemies likewise. I hunger and thirst after righteousness. I rejoice in my God, and delight in doing His will. I know in whom I have believed. My name is written in heaven. Hallelujah!

“Friday, Nov. 22d.—I enjoyed a fulness of God in my soul; and had infinite sweetness in communion with my Saviour. Lord, I am not worthy of these manifestations; but I see all is of ‘free grace.’ I receive all through Christ the righteous. He drank the bitter cup, that I might drink the cup of consolation. Lord, I would love infinitely, if I were able. My whole soul cries out for power to do Thy will perfectly.

“Monday, December 2d.—I feel I am a mere nothing; and that if God withdraw His grace from me but for a moment, I should do nothing but sin.

“I felt much shame before the Lord to-day, for my unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness. O God, enter not into judgment with me for my sins of omission!

“Sunday, July 4th.—I was troubled in my spirit, because of lightness of heart, and speaking ‘my own words.’ (Isai. lviii.) How many idle words do I speak! It ill becomes a Christian, much more a Preacher, ever to laugh.

“I lay down in peace, because I have an Advocate with the Father.

“October 6th.—I arose with much sorrow and concern; and with shame, and much brokenness of heart, bowed my soul before the Lord. My heaviness endured, as it were, but a moment, and the Divine light shone transcendently bright upon my

soul. Praying with a few friends, my joy in the Lord overcame my feeble body. And it proved to be a preparation for a trial, which came soon after. (See and compare Matt. ix. 16, with chap. iv. 1.) I had sweet communion with Jesus, and three of His redeemed ones, this day. In the evening I pressed upon the people the necessity of 'inward life,' from Acts v. 20.

"Sunday, 22d.—All the day long my Lord was wonderfully present with me in every ordinance. Truly my soul longed vehemently to be, and live, like my Saviour, the holy Jesus: This indeed is the thing I aim at: and I believe, according to the sure word of promise, I shall attain. O, what depths and heights of holiness do I discern attainable in this world!

"My soul was mightily encouraged, while I expounded John xiv. 21–23. Inward and constant liberty is what I want; to be always recollected, having my mind stayed upon God. I would live like an angel below. For some moments, indeed, I often love and rejoice in a wonderful manner: but, alas! how soon it dies! I become comparatively cold, and can neither pray with freedom, nor rejoice with reverence.

"Prayer, and reading the Scriptures, are my daily delight.

"O Jesus, Thou holy Lover of my soul, unite me more closely to Thyself. Be Thou my glory, my joy. Thou art my all in all.

"Still, nature, the devil, and grace, are striving with me. Christ, however, has the upper hand; but I want Him 'to live and reign, the Lord of every motion of my soul.'

"I prayed with my kindred at taking my leave of

them.* My brother and sister were ill, and my mother weeping after me. I found a great struggle, and believe I should have stayed, but for those scriptures: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me:' (Matt. x. 37 :) and, 'Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.' (Luke ix. 60.) My heart felt pain and sorrow; but I took up my cross, and went immediately to Ballygarane, (where were a colony of Germans,) and preached that night. O, what is needful for a minister of Jesus! what faith, love, purity, Divine light, life, and strength, to finish his course with joy!

"Meeting the penitents, I could hardly speak in the last prayer, I was so overpowered with the presence and majesty of God.

"I arose early this morning, after watering my pillow with my tears more than ever I remember to have done before.

"Throughout the various exercises of the day, I had strong assurance that the Lord would eternally save me; especially as I sat at dinner, conversing with my brethren on the things of God.

"Having this evening to myself, without preaching," (a rare thing with him,) "I shut myself up, and sought the Lord with prayers and tears. Show me, my Lord, Thy glory; or let me die that I may see Thee! If I cannot perfectly love Thee, and do Thy will upon earth, send for me, and take my soul to heaven. But, Lord God, hast Thou not spoken by Moses, Deut. xxx. 6; and by Ezekiel, chap. xxxvi. 23-32? If these are Thy words and promises, I pray and plead that they may be fulfilled in me,

* He was then going to England the third, and which was the last, time.

according to their utmost extent. O, come, and baptize me with fire!

"At prayer with some friends, the Lord applied powerfully to my heart, 'Go, and sin no more.' Now the Lord has answered for Himself. I believe it is His will, that I should sin no more, and that I should have such a faith, as never to depart, from this moment, from Christ, in thought, word, or deed; that so, being inseparably one with Him, I should walk in the Spirit, and sing and praise Him evermore! Angels, praise my Saviour!

"Sunday, 1757.—All the day I was happy in my Lord, rejoicing in confidence that He would save me eternally. I could pray, and love, and weep.

"It was a day of great blessing, and of great trials. I came home through much snow and rain. But it was all sweet with Christ. I called on the Strong for strength; and, after meditation, lay me down in peace.

"I employed all the day in reading the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; save some time which I spent in endeavouring to convince a man, (who contended much,) that there is salvation for a person, though he does not make use of the Church of England's Liturgy. I had many comforts, with strong temptation.

"With a heart full of matter, I preached on Eph. vi. 11. I could truly say, that the law of Thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

'Wide as the world is Thy command!
Vast as eternity Thy love!'

"At dinner my soul was sweetly drawn out after God. I felt such an assurance of eternal salvation

as I never had before; not with such a degree of clearness of evidence.

"I wept and prayed before the Lord, that He would make me entirely pure in heart, and bless all His children. It was a happy day.

"I felt great love to all mankind. My soul pleaded with God in their behalf. O Jesus, hasten Thy kingdom. Come, and put a period to sin and misery! O my God, suffer not a vain thought to live in me. I never can rest, till Jesus has poured His humble, pure, and happy mind into my soul. For some moments I did taste of the felicity of heaven; but, through pain and unbelief, it was of short continuance.

"Friday.—It being the public fast, I preached on Isaiah lviii. 3. It was a day of feasting to my soul. With great delight I rested in my God; and it seemed to me, that the people of God were not yet to suffer. Hereafter it will be; but at present the grand controversy is with Antichrist.* Jesus will avenge the quarrel of His covenant.

* For some considerable time before, and during a great part of his last sickness, his thoughts entered deeply into the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. He calculated the times with great exactness, and spared no labour and pains to be fully informed concerning the great things which those passages insinuate still await the world. In short, he was rapt up in those future scenes, "hastening to the coming of the Son of God," in His kingdom of grace and glory. His opinion was, that great and amazing things were at the very doors; and he has frequently said to a young man, "My brother, if you live to the years of a man," (meaning three-score and ten,) "you shall see these things." I avoid inserting particularly his calculations and sentiments, because so many wise and good men before him have been mistaken on this head, for some generations past. Our Lord is welcome, when, and however, He shall be pleased to come. He says Himself, it will be at a time.

“ I seek perfection, and uninterrupted communion with the blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. True, I am not worthy of the crumbs under Thy table; yet I look, through Thy rich grace, for all the precious and eternal blessings of the new covenant.

“ Sunday.—This was a glorious day indeed. Great and marvellous were the blessings which God bestowed upon me. He blesses me in every duty: all is useful: all works together for my good. I go on my way singing the hundred and thirty-eighth Psalm: ‘ They shall sing in the ways of the Lord; for great is the glory of the Lord.’

“ Jesus was with me in all I did. He gave me light, love, help, joy, peace, and strength in all. In His Spirit I went to rest.

“ Wherever I was, and in whatsoever I did, my soul delighted in God: never had I deeper, or more sweet, manifestations of His gracious presence. I could not but praise Him, and thirst for more perfect union with Him! Surely this is the foretaste of glory! O, if Christians did but rightly understand the nature, power, and extent of ‘ the kingdom of God ’ in the soul, I am persuaded they would not rest satisfied with the bare pardon of sin, and some joy and peace, when they may have perfect and uninterrupted rest! If once sin be totally destroyed, and the spirit filled with the light and love of God, it is then neither hurt nor hindered by any person or thing; but steadily goes on its heavenly journey,

when the generality of people, at least, think little about the matter. He bids His children to be always ready; and lets them know the way: “ Watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man! Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing.”

uniting to Christ more and more daily. 'It does not yet appear what we shall be,' even in this world.

"O Christ! what hast Thou done for me? What shall I say of or unto Thee? This I say, that I love Thee! O, let it be with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength! At intercession, I felt such a degree of the presence of God as utterly amazed me. O glorious Lord, how shall I bless Thee?

"My heart continually rested in God, and drank of the living waters; yea, my very body was supported by the joy wherewith my soul was refreshed: so that after preaching three times to-day, beside visiting the sick and well, my strength was more than when I arose in the morning.

"Friday.—A day of fasting." (A frequent practice of his.) "At prayer with brother M——n, my soul was greatly humbled before God. Entire resignation, without much joy, was the state of my heart this day.

"Saturday, March 12th, 1757.—Preparing for a short journey to-day, and laying up my books, I felt some little distraction. I could bless God, however, that I had not money to lay up. Alas! for the rich of this world! How are they to be pitied! How hardly can they be saved! Jesus, make and keep me poor in spirit; nor suffer this world ever to defile me. Suffer not my soul to cleave to the dust, but cause all my affections to flow towards Thyself. I would not live upon earth. I desire, pray, and labour, that my heart may be in heaven, with Christ my Head.

'Each act, each thought, he questions, What its weight,
Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?
And what it there appears, he deems it now;
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul.'

"Sunday, 13th.—I conversed with one to-day who told me, that for fourteen years last past she never found any unhappiness, but always rejoiced in the love of God. Before and after sacrament, I found such desire as almost made my heart break. My soul and flesh cried, mourned, and wept for the perfect love of God. There is a beauty and excellence in holiness, which has quite won my heart.

"I felt a deep necessity of constant and habitual preparation for death.

"All day, both in reading, prayer, and conversation, I felt something of that promise, John iv. 14. I look for religion to possess, and entirely to change, me. I see and feel that Christianity is something Divine, living, generous, powerful, and internal. It is God dwelling in the soul of man. (2 Cor. vi. 16.)

"Friday, 18th.—I prayed and read till twelve. My body began then to complain. It does not like fasting; but my soul did banquet on the rich delicacies of the love and promises of God. I am in the way to heaven; but I want a heavenly nature,—heaven within me. My soul can be satisfied with nothing less than God. Jesus, my blessed Jesus, let me ever esteem Thy blood and righteousness above the whole world! Through Thee I come to God. By Thee I enter heaven; Thou art heaven.

"From the labour of this day I was truly tired in body; but thankful and serene in spirit. I had no ravishing joy nor overflowings of love.

"My heart was penetrated with the goodness and love of God. I see still more clearly, that love is the fulfilling of the law,—supreme, constant, and perfect love of God, and pure benevolent love to the whole of human kind.

'Happy soul, when once renew'd,
 God in thee, and thou in God,
 Only feel'st within thee move
 Tenderness, compassion, love.
 Love immense, and unconfined,
 Love to all of human kind;
 Love, which willeth all should live;
 Love, which all to all would give;
 Love, that over all prevails;
 Love, that never, never fails:
 Stand secure, for thou shalt prove
 All the' eternity of love!'

"There is, there can be, no higher, no better, no sweeter divinity than this, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am His!' O my soul, rest in this! Be satisfied and safe in the protecting, sanctifying, and reviving love of Immanuel, God with us.

"The 33d chapter of Exodus came in my course of reading to-day. And, O, what pleading and communion between Moses and his God! Happy man! who conversed with the glorious Jehovah face to face.* And yet St. John seems to express something higher and sweeter than even this: 1st Epistle i. 3. For, certainly, eternal union with God, and a fulness of His Spirit, are more excellent than any external manifestation can be.

"This was one of my blessed days, wherein I had a foretaste of the powers and glory of the world to come.

"I retired a few minutes after five, to wait for the coming of Jesus. My soul is all desire after Christ. I am resolved to love and serve Him so as I have

* That is, with a degree of familiarity and access which was not allowed to any of the other patriarchs or prophets. For, strictly speaking, "no man hath seen God at any time."

never yet done. Come, Holy Ghost, and kindle the fire within my breast.

“From a quarter after four this morning till ten, I spent in prayer, and reading the Scriptures; and such humiliation of soul, such a sense of my vileness, I hardly ever felt. It was genuine, godly sorrow, indeed; with a clear sight of the odiousness of sin. I believe the first time I ever sinned was brought to my remembrance. My head was as waters, and my heart as wax before the fire. But all the time, I had a clear sense of the love of God; a witness that I was accepted in the Beloved; and all the day after, my soul delighted itself in the Lord.

“I ought to esteem myself unworthy of any comfort; my sins having justly deserved damnation. The blood of Christ is of infinite value and efficacy; otherwise I should never be saved. Infirmities, so called, which once I passed over without much remorse, now appear heinous, black, and damnable; and if God did not bear witness with my spirit, that they are all forgiven, they would sink me into misery. People are seldom sufficiently sensible of the odiousness of pride, anger, internal concupiscence, or an inordinate love of the creature; together with the neglect of self-denial, and bearing the daily cross. These are overlooked; yea, some even plead for, and attempt to justify, them. Lord, let me never be an advocate for the devil. Give me grace heartily to love those who tell me of my faults. Search out my sin, till Thou find none. My whole trust is in the blood of Jesus. I have no other plea; for this one is enough: it will, it doth prevail with God, and bring my soul to glory.

“In my closet the former part of this day, it was made indeed a time of love. I felt such sweetness

and Divine felicity in my soul, and by faith beheld the glory of God in such a manner as words cannot describe. I saw and tasted God in all things. My Lord Jesus Christ appeared wonderful to me indeed. (Isaiah ix. 6.) Praise, blessing, honour, glory, and thanksgiving be ascribed to the holy and adorable Trinity! What could I have believed, what understood of Thee, unless Thou, my Lord, hadst revealed it to me?* O love Divine! O the wisdom and power of God! Human tongue cannot express, nor angel minds conceive, how great and wonderful ye are in the saints; by whom God is glorified, and in whom Christ is justified by the Spirit; (1 Tim. iii. 16;) to whom heaven is, as it were, let down, and whom eternal glory momentarily awaits! They now drink of the rivers of pleasure, of the well of life; and are warmed with the beams of the Divine Sun! They are delighted with praises, allured by pleasures, clothed with light, and filled with God. Hallelujah! Amen."

CHAPTER III.

The same Subject continued.

THE continued and progressive advancement of his soul in the knowledge of God is very discernible in the preceding sketch of his experience: although in the expression of it, and of what follows, in particular, he seems often at a loss for words; human language falling so far short of those things of God, which can only be spiritually discerned. In those

* He seems to refer to some particular communication from God of His triune majesty.

collections we see a soul peculiarly remarkable for a daily, serious, steady, exact, and uniform course of walking inwardly with God, and attending outwardly on all the precepts of the Gospel. He poured out simply his thoughts from the standing treasury of his heart, for his own sole use ; for the more effectual promotion of his intercourse with God, and for the better adjustment of all his spiritual concerns.

“ That ready, his last debt may pay,
He summ’d his life up every day.”

“ 1757.—I was up before five ; read and prayed till I went to chapel. I felt much. The Lord knows what ! In the evening we (the Society) met together, in order to devote ourselves to God afresh, by renewing our covenant with Him. My soul was greatly humbled before God, and felt that for my backslidings He might justly have cast me off ; for although I have not wickedly departed from my God, yet for my blots and short-comings I was made to blush. Jesus, however, I know, stands my Advocate ; and because He lives, I live also.

“ I rose early ; and, after prayer and the sermon, communicated. The adorable Saviour gave me a taste of His sweetness, and a sight of His glory. I read, prayed, and conversed with Christian friends the rest of the day ; waiting for perfect love, and exhorting others earnestly to seek after the same. Surely nothing is so desirable as this,—God in us, and the very perfection of Gospel holiness. No man can be thoroughly blessed, till this unmixed love of God purifies his heart and fills his whole soul.

“ Although my employment is various, yet I refer all things to God.

"In all I did all day, God was my life, my joy, and my strength. His love was as fire within me. I never felt such a burning in my heart before. O Jesus, what hast Thou done for me !

"I saw this day, on a very trifling occasion, the necessity of having supernatural light, and a witness from God in all things, even of the common affairs of life, that I please Him. Some things occur which seem to be *in equilibrio*, so that one may reason for hours, and not be able to turn the scale. O, may I never want light from God, whereby I may clearly discern what I ought to do, and what avoid ! And, O, let me have Thy strength also ; or the light that is in me will be turned to darkness ; for, alas ! I often see my way, but am lame, or drag on heavily. Yes,

'Experience but too plainly shows
That man can act against the truth he knows.'

"Happy the man who gives up all for Christ ; who, having discovered that the favour and enjoyment of God is the 'pearl of great price,' sells all earthly loves, and longs that he may buy—freely receive the unspeakable gift of God.

"Soon after ten, I lay down, but could not sleep, through a deep and comfortable sense of the love of Christ. His Spirit rested upon me, and made my heart flame with love to my God, and my All. It never entered into my heart to conceive the loving Him with all the heart, till He revealed it to me by His Spirit.

"Throughout the whole of my progress, I feel that Satan is my enemy, but Jesus is my friend. I fear not then : my Lord will save me from every evil work, and preserve me to His heavenly kingdom.

"The fire of Divine love burned incessantly in my soul. Yet I perceive I must still wear some of the marks of my captivity; namely, sickness, infirmity, and death. My soul would fain fly up to God; but I am yet detained. I conversed with some eminent Christians; and Jesus fulfilled His word, being with us of a truth.

"This day was as yesterday, and much more abundantly. Indeed, I can declare how greatly the Lord abased my soul, and broke me as it were in pieces. I could not perceive that any sin had place in me; but I wait for a stronger evidence that I am made pure in heart. O God, show me what by grace I am. Show me if there be pride, anger, or unbelief in my heart. Jesus, Son of the living God, send down the Holy Ghost from the Father to bear me witness, and so to shine upon Thy own work. Humble and prove, but strengthen and comfort me too. I am Thine. There is not one doubt in my heart but Thou wilt save me for ever. I sing praises! *Te Deum* is sweet to me; so is the *Magnificat*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*. O, what has God wrought for me! Jesus, Thou art my strength and righteousness! I am safe in Thee; Thou art my rock! Salvation is unto me for walls and bulwarks.

"Having preached on 'obtained promises,' and having met the society, I retired about ten. It was a festal day to my soul. I do feel from experience and Scripture, that God has indeed changed my heart, and destroyed the works of the devil. My heart cried for humility and love,—the whole mind of Christ.

"The love of God still increased more abundantly than ever; the fire burned vehemently within me. I saw more clearly that God had confirmed me in

His favour; and that all was quietness and assurance for ever. I am astonished at the gift of God; and am willing, if it pleaseth Him, to be hated of all nations for His name's sake. I will sing of mercy and judgment.

"This day I was sorely tempted. Lord Jesus, Thou knowest what my temptations are. I would rather die, than deny Thee by sinning against Thee. Thou seest my simple heart. O, guard and cover my head! My enemies are many, subtle, and powerful, and malicious; but Thou art greater than they all. O God, Thou art my friend and strong helper. I will trust, and not be afraid.

"I sensibly felt the Lord impressing His image on my soul. O perfect love! It is all in all in religion. I want it above everything, even this fulness of God in Christ.

'O shed it in my heart abroad,
Fulness of love, of heaven, of God!'

"The Lord gives me to drink of His love, as out of a river. All things work together for my good. May everyone that is godly praise Him for this, and trust in His name for ever!

"I took to my bed, through violence of pain in my head, and other symptoms of a fever. I resigned myself to God, and was unmoved. I wept with gratitude to my good God. My fever soon abated; and in the night I got rest. So graciously does He deal with me!

"At the Lord's table, I had not only a clear witness that all was forgiven me, but likewise strong assurance, that God had purified my heart by faith. My soul was deeply affected with His love. The blessed Jesus is present with and precious to me.

O, let my soul adore the Lord, and tell of His works with gladness. Let this be written for the generations to come.

“I love, rejoice, and give thanks. I can truly say, that Thou, O Lord, art my God for ever and ever.

“I cannot be truly content, but when I feel my heart penetrated with Thy goodness. I would be always praising Thee, and telling of Thy love, O Jesus. Thou makest my cup to run over.

“I wept with a sense of the goodness of God to me, and found all my dependence on Christ,—Christ alone! He makes me to rejoice in His salvation. His blood, and not my holiness or usefulness, is the only cause of my acceptance, and final justification. O, who can bear praise, and rejoice in contempt? Only he that is fully crucified with Christ. This is my aim, to burn and flame with pure love to God. Nothing less than the full enjoyment of Him shall ever satisfy me. Thy presence makes my heaven. O, praise the Lord, ye servants of the Lord, all ye that do His pleasure! Why am I not lost in astonishment and love? O the goodness and condescension of the blessed Jesus!

“I was this day extremely ill in body: there was a burning all over my flesh. But God was the rest and life of my soul; who, notwithstanding my sickness, enabled me to continue in prayer and reading His word; yea, there was a burning of love in my heart. O, may I sink into this boundless sea, and lose myself in God!

“Trials being just at hand, that word was remarkably applied to my heart, ‘I will be with thee in trouble.’

“This afternoon, taking a view of my whole life, from my infancy, the manner of bringing me up, &c.,

I could not but admire and adore, with weeping, the goodness of God for His dealings with me. I was an ignorant, poor sinner; having no knowledge of God, and little of this world. But the Lord looked upon me, and said unto me, Live! My soul doth praise and magnify His name for ever! O for an enlarged heart! Jesus, Thou art my strength.

"I believe great things are at hand for me. This was one of my best days. Nothing will satisfy me till John xiv. 23 is more fully than ever fulfilled in me: 'And My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.' Jesus saith, 'I come quickly.' Lord Jesus, come! My soul burns with desire: I pant for the living God. O, strengthen me to do always the things that please Thee. I believe Thou wilt fully and finally save me.

"O, what a mystery is the love of Christ. How sweet a banquet! how delicious a wine! Lord, Thou hast ravished me with Thy love! Death is now sweet to me; and eternity affords me a most blessed and glorious hope. O, what has God done for me! Holy Lord, accept of my heartiest praise, and the most perfect love that I at present can give.

"I feel the life which never shall have an end.

"Both my body and soul were affected with the great power of God resting upon me this day. My whole nature bowed before the present Deity; and His high praises were in my mouth. He said unto my soul, 'Thou art made whole.' I replied, 'Lord, I believe.'

"In the midst of a variety of critical circumstances, my conscience was kept pure. 'He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.' 'And what can harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?'

“My soul longs for fuller union with God ; for more of the root and fruit of holiness, faith, and love. O, let me lean on Thy breast, and kiss Thy feet ! Keep me, my Lord, in Thy bosom.

“Humility was my delight this day. I feel within me that power of love which shall never fail. Jesus will be my full, my everlasting Saviour.

“All day my cup ran over. I came to my room both wet and weary, and lay down happy. My spirit still magnifies the Lord. I rest in Him. He giveth His beloved rest.

“To rejoice evermore is my portion under the sun. My heart dissolves with the goodness of God. Truly Thou art unto me ‘a place of broad rivers.’ (Isai. xxxiii.) Blessed be the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ! A stranger intermeddleth not with the happiness which I feel. The half cannot be told. O, it is heaven upon earth ! After several exercises of faith, love, and prayer, I lay down in peace. My heart is full ; and yet,

‘A point my good, a drop my store ;
Eager I ask, and pant for more ;
So strong the principle Divine !’

“O, how sweet is it to retire from the world ; yea, even from converse with the holiest Christians, to wait upon God alone ; and to get closer acquaintance with the blessed Jesus ! Happy the man that can go to God at any time, praying to Him with faith and fervency. My God, all my soul cries aloud for more of Thy light and love. Manifest Thyself more fully within me !

“Lord, I know not that there is anyone living that has greater cause to love, and serve Thee in truth, than myself ; for Thy ways of love towards

me have been, and still are, very wonderful. O, how many sins hast Thou forgiven me! How many snares of the devil hast Thou broken and delivered me from! How many pains and afflictions hast Thou supported me under! How many fears and sorrows hast Thou, from time to time, banished from my heart! Thou hast given me also of Thy gifts; and, with reverence I speak it, Thou hast given me Thy grace. Thou hast sent me to preach Thy word, and given me favour in the eyes of the people; neither have I spent my strength in vain. I believe, Lord, Thou hast given me Thyself; and that Thou wilt give me, in and with Thee, both grace and glory!

‘Come, Lord, Thy Spirit bids Thee come;
Give me Thyself, and take me home;
Be now the glorious earnest given.
The counsel of Thy grace fulfil,
Thy kingdom come, Thy perfect will
Be done on earth, as ’tis in heaven.’

“I retired to fast; and poured out my heart for my own soul, for the church of God, and for mankind in general; that God would reform the whole world. Days of fasting become sweet to me. I find more and more delight in them. But by grace I am saved. Jesus is my righteousness. Through faith in His blood, I offer myself, and all I do, to Him. The favour of God I obtained by His death; the image of God is stamped upon my heart by His Spirit; and through His intercession I obtain everlasting life. And yet will He reward every man according to his works.

“I was this day sensibly convinced of the danger of following impulses of any kind, unless supported by the express authority of Scripture. Nature and

Satan suggest a variety of things, which, having a show of truth and goodness, often lead persons into extravagance and error. It seems, however, a sure rule, that whatsoever promotes or increases purity and meekness, love towards God and our neighbour, must be from heaven. And whatsoever does not tend to this ought to be rejected. But, O, what need is there here of spiritual discernment, to distinguish between the real graces of the Holy Ghost, and the counterfeit appearances of the devil and self-love! God of truth and love, lead and establish my soul in the paths of justice, mercy, and truth, and humility. Make me of quick understanding in Thy fear; nor leave me a moment to my own wisdom or strength. My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

“I adore Thee, O my God, that Thou hast made it lawful for me to pray to Thee. O, how great is Thy condescension, to regard such a poor creature as I! I will extol Thy goodness, O Lord, my King.

“All day long my heart burned with the love of God. My desires were unutterable; but He who knows the mind of the Spirit will grant me all my petitions.

“I had close trials; but the consolations of God were so many, and so strong, that I was borne above them. My body and soul were exceedingly strengthened by the Divine grace. The baptism of fire I experience more than ever. But still I am a poor creature.

“O, how soon will this dream of life be ended! Lord, I long to see Thee as Thou art. Give me patience, gracious Lord.

“For about two hours in my room, I found such

communion with God as my pen cannot write. No, it is beyond the power of words to describe the happiness which I felt. Alas! that men should be so ungrateful to God, and such enemies to their own souls, as not to seek happiness in Jesus. O the delight of a soul fully united to God!

"At His table the Lord met me this day in a wonderful manner. My whole frame was so affected and overpowered, that I was ready to resign my soul into His hands.

"I was still more deeply sensible of God's presence. My desire was so strong, that it even pained my breast exceedingly. Indeed, I cannot tell what I then felt. It was the work of God; but He knows in what manner and degree. The fire spread; the light shined; and the power wrought: in short, 'God within me lived!' Sing a new song, O my soul; sing with a mighty voice. Proclaim to angels and men the goodness of the Lord. Jesus, help me to praise Thee yet more and more!

"I met with several trials to-day; but it was given me to bear them cheerfully, and to praise the Lord, who has given me integrity of heart, and simplicity of intention, in all my ways. Lord, I love Thee. I will praise Thy name yet more, even for ever and ever!

"O, how plain it is, that God reveals to babes those gracious things which are hidden from the wise and prudent! so doth He magnify His mercy, and stain the pride of human glory. In my closet, I wept much, that I may be more filled with God than ever.

"I thirsted and prayed this day to be with Him. My whole soul was in a flame for God. O for more faith, to see Him continually!

“Lord, I am sorely tempted ; but Thou comfortest me.

“I am happy in Thy love. Still open Thy kingdom more fully and powerfully within me.

“In all things I come short ; but I have the testimony of a good conscience.

“I stand as in the presence of God. The awe of God, I feel, rests upon my soul. O, how dreadful, and yet how joyful, is this place ! Lord Jesu, Thou art Immanuel, God with *me* !

“I mourned for the sins of the people, and found a willingness even to lay down my life, if that would save them from hell. Many wept and trembled. O the depths of love in God !

“I felt this day an ardent desire to suffer for His name’s sake, though I am conscious of my own weakness.

“Being much disturbed by dreams, I rose early, and called upon God. I continued reading, praying, and weeping, till seven in the evening. I was mollified, and deeply humbled. My soul adored Immanuel, and desired to die, rather than offend Him. O Holy Ghost, abide with and in me for ever ! A short sentence which occurred this day in reading, and which I made the subject of discourse, deeply affected me ; namely,

אלהים אתה אלי

“O God, Thou art my God. Blessed be Thy majesty, and exalted be Thy name. Let the earth and heavens praise and proclaim Thy greatness and glory. Jesus, I love and adore Thee ! My soul’s delight is in Thee !

“I was told of some who talked evil of me. I prayed for myself and for them ; and truly the love

of God was as a mighty fire in my soul. O, what a heaven is this!

“Although love and joy lived and flowed in me, yet I wept and made supplication, being strongly tempted by the devil. Ah, Lord, Thou knowest my state and trials. My desire is before Thee, and my groanings are not hidden from Thee. Hast not Thou made me pure, and sealed me Thine for ever? Shine on Thy work, and bear Thy witness with my heart. Suffer not Thy servant to be of a doubtful mind.

“I had a most comfortable morning: God did indeed bless, comfort, and establish my soul. And I continued in this fervour of love all the day.

“I see that I ought to be much in prayer for the Holy Ghost. I plainly perceive that to be taught by Him for one hour is more profitable to the soul than many days spent in reading.

“I was extremely ill with pain in my bowels. However, I visited and exhorted the people; and God gave me entire resignation.

“I spent several hours in private, begging of God to enable me to fulfil the law of love. I feel, so as I cannot write, the extent of Christian obedience. How deep, how wide!

“O, what a day of trial and consolation was this! Deliver me, O Lord, from the strife of tongues, and from the ungodly, who are a sword of Thine. I found in retirement this day sore struggles, and deep consolation.

“O, how great is the profit of simple prayer, and diligent reading of the holy Scriptures! They are, I find, of singular service to me. My soul is calmed, sweetened, melted, invigorated, and sensibly strengthened, in the exercise of these holy duties. I weep,

and pray, and give thanks; yet still I want deeper repentance, and much more humility. I would be penetrated with the sense of my own helplessness; and I do not find power equal to my will. I live, however, by faith, and find God unspeakably and continually present.

“My soul was solidly happy, and longing for humility this day. I desire to be simple, and filled more abundantly with love to God and my neighbour.

“I never felt such gratitude to God, as I did this day, for bringing me from the idolatry of the Romish Church. My heart was grieved in reading some of their horrid doctrines,* about saints and images. O God, Thou hast done this for me; and Thou hast done many thousand things beside for me; and now I beseech Thee, do this for me,—give me an humble, thankful, and penitent heart.

“This was a feast and a fast day to my soul. All the ordinances of God are exceedingly precious and profitable to me.

“I was all day deeply engaged with God: I wept much, and prayed earnestly, yet I had not much joy. I had a full and firm confidence that He would fulfil His word of promise to my soul. My weakness can do nothing without Thy power. I lay hold of Thy strength, and offer myself to Thy holy will. O, let me glorify Thee, as well by suffering as by doing.

“This morning I met with a woman, where I breakfasted, who was exceedingly happy in God. A

* He was, about this time, employed partly in reading Bishop Usher's famous Disputation with the Jesuit in Ireland. And of this book he says, “I cannot think that a Papist who has learning, and the fear of God, can, after reading it, remain in the errors of Popery.”

few weeks ago, I met her in the same place; but she was then utterly dead and careless. I spoke plainly to her; and at parting, after prayer, said, 'I pray God, you may never rest till you rest in Christ.' The words were applied to her heart, and her burden increased every day, so that she was brought almost to black despair, when God revealed His love in her heart. She could now scarce tell it, through weeping. O, what a God is the God of the Christians!

"In prayer my soul was happier than ever in the thought, 'I shall live with God for ever.'

"Dulness and wandering would creep upon me, but prayer scatters every obstacle.

1758. Sunday, January 1st.—We met at four; and after prayer, I preached on Psalm xc. 12. We had the good Mr. — at the chapel, whose humility and fervour more than compensated for the irregularity of his sermon. I have had much more happiness on other days than on this Sabbath, though not more sincerity and resignation. I feel my weakness, and confess my ignorance; and implore the wisdom and power of God.

"After being some hours in my room, the fire from heaven went through me, and I could praise the Lord continually for His goodness to me. I find such an impression of His power and love, as cannot be expressed in words.

"This whole Sabbath was both a delight and honourable to me. Such revelations of God's goodness, such manifestations of His Spirit, and such operations of His love, I never felt. My very outward man was affected and refreshed. It cannot be declared what I then felt. O, there is much in these words, 'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.' Whatsoever I did, the Lord made

it to prosper. O holy Father, let all the host of heaven praise and adore Thy name!

"As I walked through the street, He inflamed my heart with desire to live to Him more than ever I had done.

"God is love. This is the foundation of all my hopes. I feel much shame because of my infirmities; but I have also sweet consolations.

"My joy has not been to-day as much as the last Lord's day; but my faith is more confirmed.

"I was seized with a violent pain in my stomach, and was exceedingly ill. However, by the mercy and power of God, I went through the duties of the day with delight; and I could thank God for pain, so as I never could before.

"As I read my Greek Testament this morning, my soul magnified the Lord for the description and progress of His work, contained in the Acts of the Apostles. And while I am now writing, my soul is so cheered with the fire of love, as I cannot describe, unless to such as experience the same.

"Lord, I have not publicly preached for Thee this day;" (which was indeed an unusual thing with him;) "but I have had many blessings from Thee, and my heart has been in Thy work. I beseech Thee, bless the labours of Thy more faithful servants whom I have heard.

"I have great cause to praise God, that I am free from worldly care. Surely I was appointed to this work in which I am engaged. O that I may obtain mercy of the Lord, to be found faithful! O Jesus, plead Thou my cause in the heavens, and fill me with Thy grace here upon earth. All my hope of heaven stands in Thee! O, show me, if there be aught in me which Thou abhorrest. And let me hear

Thee say, 'Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.'

"O that I could love and obey, as fast as I learn. Truth appears to me every day with new lustre: new springs are opened, and the best wine kept until the last.

'On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In that for which they long; for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heavenly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;
While nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel,
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour;
Advancing virtue in a line of bliss!'

"When, blessed God, shall I worthily magnify Thee!

"February 18th.—This was a day of close trial. But my God doubly comforted me.

"Sunday, 19th.—After asking help from God, I preached my farewell sermon" (farewell indeed! it was the last he preached in London, and the last day of his being there) "at the Foundery, from Acts xx. 32: 'And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.' And in the evening I bade them farewell at the chapel in West-street, from Col. ii. 6: 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.' In all the duties of the day, public and private, God was exceedingly gracious to me. I believe I never felt such strength of love. I was in truth 'sick of love.' I

could not sufficiently praise Him. All words came far short of what I felt. Lord, Thou hast given me much favour in the eyes of this people. They show it by words and deeds; yea, prayers and tears! Reward them a thousand fold. Bring me safe to Bristol, that there I may show forth the praises of the Lord, and declare Thy righteousness and Thy salvation. Amen, Lord Jesus.

“Monday, 20th.—After prayer with our family, I set out in the machine. I read my Hebrew Psalter, and the Christian’s Pattern. I found great tranquillity of mind, and my spirit was refreshed with the goodness of God. I conversed with three gentlemen, my companions in the coach, on Divine subjects. I prayed earnestly to God before I set out, that my fellow-travellers might not swear or curse: and the Lord heard me; for so it was, they rather approved of Scripture subjects and studies. O the joy of a good conscience, and the rest which the soul finds in the love of God! The Lord supplies the absence of friends, and all things that are dear to us. His presence makes our paradise. It is not where, but what, we are, which is the great matter.

“Thursday, 23d.—At Bristol, I met Mr. W. T., under whose preaching” (as has been related) “God gave me the clear witness of His forgiving love. Our meeting was for the better. ‘As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.’ We remembered the years of the right hand of the Most High; and how the Lord filled our mouths with laughter, when He brought back our captivity. Lord, bless this man, and make him faithful in all things! And now that I am come to this city, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, and spend my life and strength in Thy service, assist me, O Lord,

and make Thy goodness known to me. Give me wisdom and strength. O, help me, Lord Jesus, to glorify Thy name. Amen.

"The Lord is my life and my salvation. He is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

"I read through to-day the Epistle of St. James. And I do not wonder that the proud, the sensual, and the lovers of the world, yea, all the ungodly of the earth, should find fault with it. In prayer with the family, the Spirit was poured out from on high upon us, and great grace rested upon us all.

"After prayer this morning, I began and read through, in Greek and Latin, the 2d Epistle to Timothy, and found much instruction and reproof for my soul. O, what a man ought a minister to be! how holy, and how wise! What courage, zeal, patience, and temperance are necessary for him in an especial manner, in order to give account of himself and others to God with joy!

"O God, my life, make me fully a partaker of my hope.

"Preaching on 1 John iv. 18, my mind was more clearly enlightened than ever, to see that 'perfect love' is Christian perfection. By simple, but powerful faith, I desire to attain it; and to live and grow in this love, till my spirit returns to God."

With such desires and in such meditations as these did he spend his days and nights, longing and sighing for the sight of God continually; and in his prayers, the violence of his affections did not a little increase the weakness of his body.

CHAPTER IV.

Of his last Sickness and Death.

HIS state of body, in general, (as has been related,) was that of a lingering death ; which, however, being interspersed with intervals of comparative health and strength, admitted of his still going on, exercising himself in the work of his calling. But by his last sickness is meant, that degree of disease which admitted of no such interval ; and at last took him off entirely from all mental or bodily labour, and ended in his removal hence.

This, his last illness, may be dated from February 24th, 1758, a few days after his arrival at Bristol, from London, in his way to Ireland. After preaching twice as usual, and studying hard all day, he was seized with violent pains in his head, and in all his bones. He, however, rose the next morning at his usual time, and preached ; retiring afterwards to his daily exercises, but still feeling the pressure of the disorder. "My body," says he, "trembled with weakness ; but my soul was happy in God !"

He avoided yielding to his pains, and proceeded in his Lord's work as usual for several days ; till at length he was constrained to take his bed. Here he was confined for several days ; and taking exact notice (as his disorder admitted) of the state of his heart, according to his constant custom, and growing something better, he wrote, from the fulness of his heart, his state and sentiments, during that time, as follows :—

"Saturday, March 4th."—(This day he took his bed.) "Good is Thy will, O Lord. Thy counsels of

old are faithfulness and truth. Thou reignest in righteousness; though no man can know love or hatred by all that is before him. (Eccles. ix. 1.) Thou givest account of thy ways to none: but assurest the righteous, that 'it shall be well with him;' and that thy corrections are with this design, that we might partake of Thy holiness. I am in Thy hands, O my God: work Thy perfect will in me, and sustain me in this trial. I call upon Thee in the day of trouble; and believe Thou wilt deliver me, and that I shall glorify Thee, and praise Thee yet more and more. Thus," (as he concludes,) "I went to bed very ill, and happy."

"Sunday, 5th.—My illness continued and increased. I had not much consolation, but was graciously preserved from buffetings. Monday, 6th.—I continued in soul as yesterday, only with more examination. Tuesday, 7th.—I had scarcely any alteration in body or soul. I cried to God, and He heard me; but the sweet and usual returns of prayer were not. Wednesday, 8th.—God gave me to weep for the sins of my whole life. Thursday, 9th.—My pains and pleasures, corporeal and spiritual, were as the day before. Friday, 10th.—I had more consolation of soul. Saturday, 11th.—The spirit of prayer was plentifully imparted to me: I could plead the mercies, and promises, and merits of God my Saviour; and His love and joy were more plentifully poured into my soul. Sunday, 12th.—I had gracious intimations of the good-will of God towards me in this sickness.

"Monday, 13th.—I was able to read and pray, and advise friends to love God, and seek Him in good earnest while they had strength. Tuesday, 14th.—I was better still, and prayed for the increase of holy

love in the children of God, and for the propagation of the faith in all nations."

Besides this brief and daily minuting down the state of his soul, he on a general review (as was his constant manner on these occasions) of the whole, has, among several other particulars, the following observations; which I mention the rather, since, beside other uses which may be gathered therefrom, it is consistent with the design of the work,—the best means of conceiving of the man as he really was.

"I had a constant witness from the Holy Ghost, that I was a child of God. However, the sins of my life were really brought to my remembrance; particularly those of my heart; the manifold backslidings known only to God. For although God preserved me from falling, even once, into those sins in which I lived in the days of my ignorance; nevertheless I saw my pride, desire, self-will, self-indulgence, levity, and mis-spending time.* I may add to these, my want of love to God, charity to my neighbour, and more serious concern for my own soul. I saw how wonderfully the Lord had dealt with me, raising me from the dust, and giving me so many and invaluable blessings; so that I ought, more than all men, to serve and love Him.

"I was, moreover, deeply convinced how possible,

* So severe a judge was he of himself; while, in the judgment of all who knew his manner of life, he was exemplarily remarkable for the direct contrary of what he here charges himself with. But "the highest flames" (to use the words of the great and pious Bishop Taylor) "are the most tremulous; and so the most holy and eminent religious persons are more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility. And it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater also be the humility of the man."

yea, easy it is for a person, after having received great light, love, power, and joy, to fall, notwithstanding, into a certain dulness of soul; and that holy desires, vehement thirstings after God, and the spirit of prayer, may be lessened, and lost. Truly, we can keep nothing, unless the Holy Ghost help our infirmities continually.

“But the grand lesson of all, which in this little interval I learned, was, the absolute necessity of being free from persons, things, and places. I saw what a tendency the soul has to rest in something beside God. I saw, that even when we give up our beloved sins, and all temporal things, we are nevertheless apt to rest in the gifts and graces of God; making them, as it were, our Saviour and Comforter, instead of Christ. Abraham’s dwelling in tents (Heb. xi.) was explained to me in a manner which I never before conceived.

“I saw farther, how deeply the love of life and learning had been rooted in my heart; and that God saw it necessary to correct me often, to show me the vanity of both.

“I believe He is resolved to save my soul to the uttermost; and He uses various ways to accomplish this end. I believe this sickness will be of great service to my soul; and perhaps of more use to the children of God than my labours could be. My desire is only to live wholly to Him, and to get more of the love and life of Christ. Lord, look upon me, a weak and inconstant man, and strengthen and establish my heart with Thy love.

“In exhorting the believers, I found much of Divine consolation. O, how sweet were these two hours; and how short! Love is a wonderful thing.

“Sunday, 26th.—I was in a high fever; yet when

I got with the family, I forgot my pain, while we conversed of the love of God. It being Easter-day, I examined what I had gained since last Easter. And I trust God has given me more humility, patience, and likeness to Himself."

He was detained at Bristol, through his illness, longer than he had intended; and was but slightly recovered, when he was told of a ship just ready to sail for Cork. Being resolved on the journey, and willing to embrace the very first opportunity, weak as he was, he embarked at Pill, on the 13th of April. The passage was extremely dangerous; insomuch that the mariners themselves looked for nothing less than perishing, so boisterous were the winds and seas. But see the blessedness of being Christians indeed; true believers in Christ! Though they expected every moment to go to the bottom of the great deep; "yet God," says he, "gave me more faith, and patience, and joy, than ever I felt before. I could not see death terrible to me. I prayed, and praised God incessantly: for I could not sleep an hour while on board; and neither could I eat. But Christ was with me in all, and supported me. I pleaded with the Lord in behalf of the passengers, beseeching Him that He would not take them away in their sins. They cried out vehemently, 'We are not fit to die.' On their account, I did not desire to sleep. I cried aloud to God in prayer, in the cabin; and they gladly attended *then*. On Saturday the wind abated; and the next day we landed safe in Cork."

On my hearing of his arrival, (being then in the county, and it being many months since we parted at London,) I hastened to see him; and can never forget the idea which the first sight of him gave me, of a man in deep "fellowship with God." On my

opening his room-door, and just appearing, he got up from his chair, being in deep contemplation ; and, with a spirit and countenance composed and solemn as the grave, he said, with a low voice, "God bless you." We embraced each other with tears ; after which, kneeling down, he prayed, as to a present God indeed ! with such melting and moving expressions, and with such reverential confidence, as surpassed all that I had known and admired in him before ; and plainly discovered his having entered, since we parted, much further into "the holiest, by the blood of Jesus."

During the time he stayed here, I was a daily witness of his manner of life ; and saw with much concern his swift-approaching end. He had most of the symptoms of a consumption in its last stage ; which increased upon him every day. "The silver cords of life began to loosen, and the golden bowl," the whole of this wonderful and curiously-wrought machine, to "be broken." He had an intermitting fever, which returned regularly every day about eleven o'clock ; an habitual cough, and most profuse night-sweats ; all which had now so emaciated and weakened him, that the marks of death already appeared upon him. And yet, notwithstanding this, he still so desired to discourse of the things of eternity, that, while he was at all able to stand, or speak, he could not be persuaded from preaching : and although he brought into the pulpit the very image of death upon his face, so that it could hardly be expected he should speak ten minutes, he has nevertheless preached a full hour, to the astonishment of all who heard him. One would have thought he must have dropped down dead immediately after.

His internal state, still the object of his close attention, during his continuance at Cork, where there is reason to believe he began first to think this sickness would be unto death, he summarily expresses thus:—

“Saturday, April 29th.—My soul truly waiteth upon God. My body feels pain and weakness; but my soul enjoys the living fire of the Holy Ghost! O, may I die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! I wait for Thy salvation, O Lord. Weak I am, but cannot be removed while Jesus is my strength. O that every pain may but increase my love to God! I am supported by the fire within, and by believing that Jesus is at the right hand of God.”

The time being come which he had appointed for leaving Cork, and going on to Limerick, being attended by his own brother, another friend and I accompanied him a dozen miles on the way. At the inn where we stopped, he discoursed to us at dinner of the things pertaining to the life of a Christian, respecting particular instances of conduct; but his weakness prevented him from saying as much as we could have desired. I shall never forget our parting. The other persons being gone down stairs, after he had said some particular things to me, we kneeled down and prayed together, for the last time. We then took our final farewell of each other in this world. He went on his way, and I went mine; each of us expecting to meet no more, till we meet in happier climes, and in a better world.

I do not find that from this time he kept any further account, in writing, of the daily state of his soul; owing, I am inclined to think, to the violence of his disorder, which increased now almost every

hour, and which weakened and impaired the faculties of his mind, as well as the strength of his body. Hence, beholding things through so defective a medium, he became, in reality, an unfit judge of his own state. The influence which this kind of disorder, in particular, frequently has upon the powers of the mind, is well known, even to the representing things, which concern one's self and others, often directly contrary to what they really are.

He had the judgment and advice of the best physicians, wherever he came; who, on the slightest intimation, offered their assistance with all cheerfulness, neither expecting nor desiring any other gratuity than (as one of them once expressed) "the prayers of Mr. Walsh." They generally agreed, that his disorder was brought on through excessive labour, frequent and loud preaching, intense application to study, want of proper and sufficient rest; and fatigue in general. They likewise judged that his case was now past all remedy.

It was, however, judged advisable that he should be removed from Limerick to the more free and open air of the country. He went thither accordingly; where he had the tenderest and most affectionate attendance, with whatsoever was judged most proper to alleviate the rigour of the disease, and restore him, if God should so please, to health. But it was now too late! And his friends perceiving that neither air nor physic availed anything, they, according to his own inclination and desire, removed him to Dublin. His next remove was to the city of the Great King, the paradise of God!

Concerning the state of his soul for a few months before his death, as he wrote nothing on the head during that time, we can speak with less certainty

than of what has been already related : and, embarking for England soon after we parted, I neither saw nor heard anything particularly concerning him, till a letter brought the tidings of his being no more in this world. But from the accounts of persons of undoubted veracity, who attended him during that time, we learn, that his state was not indeed joyous, but grievous. He drank of his Lord's cup of sorrow, and was, in truth, deeply baptized with His baptism. He was immersed in affliction's furnace, and plunged in the deepest waters.

" His flesh chastised with torturing pain
His soul, and sickness clave his bones ;
Keen anguish dwelt in every vein,
And sadly turn'd his breath to moans.
Sorrow was all his soul ; he scarce perceived,
But by the pains he suffer'd, that he lived ! "

He was tempted, and sorely buffeted of the devil. The nature of his disorder exposed him to a degree of precipitancy and discomposure, which he was more than superior to while in better health. In short, so did the wisdom of God permit, that through the malice of Satan, the extreme violence of the disorder of his body, and the concurrence of several other circumstances, this servant of God was brought to the utmost extremity of spiritual distress and anguish of soul, consistent with keeping the faith at all ; insomuch that it was but few degrees removed from despair of his salvation.

" His agonizing soul sweat blood !
With Christ he fainted on the tree,
And cried in death, ' My God, my God,
Ah ! why hast Thou forsaken me ? ' "

His great soul lay thus, as it were, in ruins, for

some considerable time ; and poured out many a heavy groan, and speechless tear, from an oppressed heart and dying body. He sadly bewailed the absence of Him, whose wonted presence had so often given him the victory over the manifold contradictions and troubles which he endured for His name's sake. A heart so sensible of the visits of its Lord, and so restless at His smallest absence, as his was throughout his warfare, must needs be deeply afflicted when left, seemingly, altogether to its own poverty, and surrounded, as it were, with hosts of infernal fiends seeking to devour him. The intervals which he had of cessation from the conflict, and of comparatively quiet confidence in God, are not perhaps so well known : but that he had such, may well be supposed ; for otherwise his soul and flesh must needs have failed before God.

It was, however, not until a short time before his complete and eternal deliverance, that his Lord appeared to his help ; and by making Himself known as Jesus, his well-known Saviour, entirely eased the anguish of his oppressed soul. The beams of His brightness dispersed the clouds ; and the smiles of His countenance more than compensated for all his night of sorrow. He spoke, and said unto him, "The winter is past ; arise, my love, and come away !" What then,

"Though the sickle, sometimes keen,
Just scars us, as we reap the golden grain ;
More than thy balm, O Gilead ! heals the wound."

The manner of his deliverance was as follows :—
A few friends being at prayer with him, on Sunday evening, as soon as they concluded, he desired to be left alone, in order, as he said, "to meditate a little."

They withdrew ; and he remained deeply recollected for some time : just then, God dropping into his soul, no doubt, some lively foretaste of the joys to come, and spreading the day of eternity through the regions of his inward man. He at length burst out in transport, and pronounced, in a dying voice indeed, but with the joy of angels, "He is come! He is come! My Beloved is mine, and I am His! His for ever!" and, uttering these words, he sweetly breathed out his soul into the arms of his Beloved, on the 8th day of April, 1759, and in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

THE CONCLUSION.

WE cannot sufficiently admire and adore the unsearchable counsels and impenetrable secrets of God our Saviour, with respect to the management of His kingdom, and the disposal of His servants. Two things are natural to reflect, on considering the preceding account in general.

1. To see a man delivered from the blindness of error and superstition, and brought into the light and enjoyment of truth, the knowledge of the true God, and of His spiritual worship; to see him brought out from the obscurity of retirement, and that by the remarkable interposition of Divine Providence, in order to spread the savour of the knowledge of God among mankind in the most public manner; to consider him as singularly fitted for this, by knowledge, by the word of truth dwelling richly in him, by purity, by zeal for God's glory, by the armour of righteousness, and by the power of God attending his word: to see such an one cut off from among men, in the prime of life, just fully furnished for promoting the kingdom of the Son of God, to which he was entirely devoted, is a thing which will be acknowledged to nonplus human understanding, too prone to think, on such an occasion, "How is this?"

Without entering deeply into the matter, one may easily learn herefrom, at least a confirmation of that weighty truth, "that God is not worshipped, or

served by men's hands, as though He needed any person or thing." He leaves no persons any room to say or think within themselves, as though the cause and glory of God needed them, or at least had some connexion with our standing or being removed. He is at no time at a loss how to serve His own glory, and the necessities of His creatures. Hereby, moreover, He would stain the pride of human glory; and teach us, what can never be too fully learned, to walk humbly with our God; not to judge according to appearances; and to learn to conceive of things and persons, not according to bare human estimation, but according to the will of God. O that we may learn from every occurrence to fly to Him in all our affections and desires! Then, whenever our change comes, we shall be welcomed by superior beings, and not much missed by men, who delight in novelties.

Whatever secret reasons might be the cause of such a procedure, in the Divine disposals; whether ingratitude, or something bordering upon idolatry, in the people; or whatever was the cause, certain it is, that we need never fail to reap instruction and advantage from such awful providences as the decease of our dearest friends, since

"For us they languish, and for us they die."

2. But what may seem most strange is, that a person so laborious for God's glory; so exemplarily religious in the whole of his conversation; so useful to others; in a word, so entirely and unreservedly devoted to Christ, should, in the time of his greatest necessity, be so destitute of spiritual comfort. And it must be acknowledged, in great measure, to be a part of those ways of which God giveth account to none. "His judgments are unsearchable, and His

ways past finding out. His way is in the sea, and His paths in the great waters ; and His footsteps are not known. And who shall say to God, What doest Thou ? ” “ What I do thou knowest not now,” is indeed applicable to the general course of God’s providences, and to much experience of Christians in particular : and perhaps this is the best footing on which to rest the present case ; namely, the mysterious counsels of God, with respect to His dealings with His servants,—with him we are considering in particular.

Who can account for that providence which left the life of so holy a person as John the Baptist in such infamous hands ? which permitted it to be sacrificed to the malice of an abandoned harlot, the petulancy of a vain girl, and the rashness of a foolish, perhaps drunken, prince, who made a prophet’s head the reward of a dance ? The same reasoning has weight with respect to the treatment which He has permitted His most eminent servants in all ages to meet with. It is the fixed decree of heaven, concerning the righteous, that through much tribulation (outward or inward, or both) they must enter the kingdom of God. And the most part of ecclesiastical story is in a great measure no other than a comment on this great truth ; which likewise receives abundant confirmation from numberless parts of holy Scripture.

There may be, for aught that can be known by us, a certain resemblance, in some particulars, between his case of whom we speak, and that of Job. (See chap. ii. 3–6.) But in both, and, indeed, in all resembling instances, the hand of the Lord is visibly seen ; that He is pitiful, and of tender mercy, and afflicts His children only for their profit, that they

might partake of His holiness. And we are well assured, that He will repay His servants in another world for whatever they suffer in this ; even of such as "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" in their flesh.

As to the difficulty of reconciling with his former enjoyments and professions such a state of conflict and discomfort as this his last stage was accompanied with, it may be considered, that although it was uncommon, yet the case is not singular : to recite examples would be endless.

It is true, that God has given us multiplied and various instances, in the last stages of His servants, in most ages, both of triumphant superiority to sickness, pain, and death, in some ; of holy mourning, deep abasement, and patient resignation in others ; and there have been those, likewise, whose last sicknesses have been such times of painful purgation from human foibles, and sore conflicts from diabolical temptations, that the utmost they have been able to do has been to abide in the furnace ; till, patience having had its perfect work, they just stepped from the cross to the crown ! witnessing only with their parting breath, Victory ! victory ! And all this it is impossible to account for by appearances.

Thus we hear one in his last sickness saying, "I am, by the wonderful mercy of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold. I feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be." Another, "I am like a bird upon the wing ; and would fain be upon Immanuel's land, where the tree of life is. Here I am, a weak man, in the hands of the king of terrors, rejoicing in hope of the glory that shall be revealed ; and that by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ. All these soft

cloths are like sackcloth, and yet I have perfect rest of spirit." Another, "O, how does the love of God wipe off all pain! The servants of God suffer nothing. Their trials are but for a moment; their joys are eternal!" Ten thousand instances of this sort might be alleged, in the present generation; (to look no farther;) persons who, throughout a course of pains and wants, evidenced the victorious conquest which faith gives over all our enemies, and over death, the last of all.

There have been those, on the other hand, who, after a course of useful and holy living, of eminency in wisdom, and in favour with God, have, nevertheless, towards the setting of their sun, wanted those joyous beams of triumphant light and life; and who approached their seat of repose with many tears and sighs, with shame, and confusion, and hopes, and dependence; and, even at the last, left nothing particularly memorable for the discourse and joys of the survivors;* but who, notwithstanding, have attained their wished-for port, and enjoy the pleasures of those peaceful mansions, (John xiv. 2,)

"Where conflicts past redouble present joys."

Diversity of complexions, different periods of grace or Divine dispensations, with a thousand particulars, known best to God, may be taken into consideration, in attempting to account for this difference in the Divine disposals concerning His servants. But I forbear attempting to solve that of which I am free

* St. Austin is said to have had the penitential psalms written in large characters, and pinned to the inside of the curtains of his dying bed, desiring to die as he repeated them, with weeping.

Bishop Usher followed the same example, and prayed earnestly to God to pardon his sins of omission.

to profess my ignorance, and wait for that light which will infallibly

“Throw full day on darkest scenes of time.”

It may be farther observed concerning this servant of God, that, although his comforts had been exceeding great throughout most part of his experience, yet he had frequent and violent encounters with the enemy: so that sometimes we find, in the same paragraph, acknowledgments of the great joy and peace which he felt, and complainings of grievous temptations and trials. Take an instance or two, among a thousand, in his own words:—

“I found in retirement sore struggles and deep consolation.” And again: “Although love and joy lived and flowed in me, yet I wept and made supplication, being strongly tempted of the devil. Ah, Lord! Thou knowest my state and trials; and my groanings are not hid from Thee! What conflicts with myself do I daily feel!”

Some are tempted most in the beginning of their conversion, and some towards the latter end; and others there are, who are sorely tempted throughout their whole life. The latter was his case. But now, especially, his natural faculties, weakening in proportion to the decay of his bodily strength, rendered him the fitter mark for Satan to attack with his last and most violent assaults; which therefore he plied to purpose. He could not, however, make him let go his integrity: nor did he alter his sentiments concerning any part of Christian doctrine, or retract anything he had formerly said relating thereto. And as to the course of his most secret walking, although, on the whole, he saw nothing whereof to glory in himself before God, but rather was continually filled

with holy shame and deep abasement at the disparity which he still perceived between himself and his holy Lord ; yet there was no particular sin, since his conversion, with the cherishing of which he could charge himself. To which may be added, that, in the midst of this "hour and power of darkness," he never once charged God foolishly ; but, on the contrary, he sought to Him with groans, and tears, and cries, without ceasing.

His sufferings both of body and mind were great beyond description : but when we consider, thus did God permit concerning him, it puts to silence every doubtful evil reasoning on the head. By constituting him a perfect sufferer, God thereby made him the more conformable to His suffering, conquering Son,—"that Man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs ;" and rendered his condition not that of a bastard, or base-born child, abandoned of God, and rejected ; but, on the contrary, that of a beloved son, scourged and purified by his heavenly Father, that he might thereby more eminently partake of His holiness and glory. And should heaven permit his conveying to us his present sentiments concerning his momentary afflictions, we should certainly hear him pronounce to this effect :—

"For all I bless thee ; most, for the severe ;
Amid my list of blessings infinite,
Stand this the foremost, that my heart has bled."

He had hope in his end ; and therefore ceased not to cry to Jesus, who was with him in reality all the while in the furnace, and finally appeared his Friend and his Beloved.

"Tried to the last, but not forsook ;
But honour'd with distinguish'd grace,
Heavenward he cast a dying look,
And saw once more his Saviour's face.

‘He’s come ! my well-beloved,’ he said,
 ‘And I am His, and He is mine !’
 He spake, he gazed, he bow’d his head,
 And sunk into the arms Divine !”

On the whole, I profess that, although, on my first hearing of the afflictive scene through which he passed, I was more astonished than at anything I ever remember to have happened to myself or others ; remaining in dumb suspense at what could be the cause of so unexpected a procedure ; nevertheless, I am now inclined to consider the whole affair as an argument rather of his strength than the contrary. His supporting at all, under such extreme sufferings, not a little demonstrates his great soul, and nearness of conformity to God his Saviour,

“ Who drank, in His sad days of flesh,
 The potion by His Father given ;
 And bids His members feel afresh
 The fierceness of the wrath of Heaven.”

“ If thou faintest,” Solomon saith, “ in the day of adversity, thy strength is small : ” and, by parity of reason, to stand in a time of sore trial argues proportionable strength. Avert, my God, avert from my soul, ill able to bear it, such a time of trial ! O Jesus, by all Thou hast done and suffered ; by Thine agony and bloody sweat ; by Thy cross and bitter passion ; by Thy meritorious death, Thy resting in the chambers of the grave, Thy triumphant resurrection and ascension, and by Thy coming again in glory ; in the time of sickness, in death, and in judgment, deliver my soul, I beseech Thee !

“ In Thy fair book of life Divine,
 My God, inscribe my name ;
 There let me fill some humble shrine,
 Beneath the slaughter’d Lamb !

“ O might I, with my parting breath,
Thee in Thy bloody vesture see,
And cast me on Thy sacrifice !
Jesus, my Lord, remember me ! ”

The thoughts of being quickly loosed from the fetters of the body had often filled his soul with the most sensible delights, desiring nothing so much as to see his God ; and the approaches of eternity did often so inflame his desires, that he was sometimes in a degree of transport. But after all that can be said on the head of this his last scene, and indeed of the methods of God’s providential dispensations in general, concerning nations or individual persons, it seems the wisest and best method to rest in that sentiment ; namely, not curiously to scan them, but rather to adore, in humble silence, His unsearchable judgments and impenetrable secrets. Since,

“ Not deeply to discern, not much to know,
Mankind was born to wonder and adore.”

Whatever is permitted to befall them in this world, we are well assured “ it shall be well with the righteous.” All things, whether prosperous or adverse, shall work together for their good. He that liveth for ever saith, “ I come quickly,”—to put a final period to the whole of mortal things, and to determine the states of all the children of Adam for ever ! His reward is with Him. We shall see Him as He is. Though now we see Him not, yet, believing, we rejoice ! O Jesus, work in our hearts that conformity to, and resemblance of, Thyself, that we may seek nothing, but night and day think of, long for, and joyfully wait for, Thine appearing.

APPENDIX.

FURTHER PARTICULARS ILLUSTRATIVE OF
MR. THOMAS WALSH'S LIFE AND CHARACTER.

HIS BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE.

"I KNEW a young man who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New, Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was Thomas Walsh. Such a master of biblic knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again."—*Wesley's Sermons*.

THE OCCASION OF HIS DYING CONFLICTS.

"Soon after his ordination, Mr. Fletcher preached a sermon at West-street chapel, in which he made some remarks on the dying hours of good men. He supposed that some comparatively weak believers might die most blessedly; and some strong ones, for the further purification of their faith, or for reasons inscrutable to us, might have tremendous conflicts. At the meeting of the bands, that excellent man, Mr. Thomas Walsh, opposed this doctrine, and told him, he thought it bore hard against God's justice, faithfulness, and covenant love to His servants. Mr. Fletcher modestly observed, that God's wisdom was sovereign and inscrutable; and though he was

sorry he had given offence, yet he could not, with a good conscience, retract what he had said. With some degree of warmth, (the constitutional failing of Mr. Walsh,) he replied, 'Be it done unto you according to your faith, and be it done unto me according to mine.' Here the matter rested. In about two years Mr. Walsh died; and so very severe were his dying conflicts, that they produced a very strong sensation among his brethren, and in none more than in Mr. Fletcher. In April, 1759, he wrote thus to Mr. Charles Wesley:—'With a heart bowed down with grief, and eyes bathed in tears, occasioned by our late heavy loss, I mean the death of Mr. Walsh, I take my pen to pray you to intercede for me. What! that sincere, laborious, and zealous servant of God! was he saved only as by fire? and was not his prayer heard till the twelfth hour was just expired? O, where shall I appear? I, who am an unprofitable servant? Would to God my eyes were fountains of water to weep for my sins! Would God I might pass the rest of my days in crying, Lord, have mercy on me! All is vanity,—grace, talents, labours, if we compare them with the mighty stride we have to take into eternity!'

"His own sermon, Mr. Walsh's remarks, and distressing end, made a lasting impression on Mr. Fletcher's mind. Often did he speak of it with amazement to Mrs. Fletcher, and would conclude with saying, 'Be it our care to lead holy lives: the comfort of our deaths we must leave with the Lord, who will do all things well.'

"I need not advert to the triumphant end with which the Lord saw good to crown his humble faith; but in justice to that wonderful man, Mr. Walsh, who, in the short space of nine years, from nineteen

to twenty-eight, ran a race of piety and ministerial labour which shames ninety-nine out of a hundred of Christ's ministers, I must undraw a veil, which, for certain reasons, Mr. James Morgan thought prudent to draw over the closing hours of his friend, that some clue may be given to what appears inexplicably mysterious. And, no doubt, the knowledge Mr. Fletcher afterwards had of the causes which led to, and in some degree explained, the conflicts his friend suffered, did greatly lessen his astonishment.

"Mr. Walsh had offered his hand to a pious woman among the Methodists, whom he considered as a widow. She respectfully declined it, saying, though she had not seen her husband for seven years, and had some reason for thinking him dead, yet, until she had better authority to go on, she deemed it her duty not to alter her state. In this very sufficient reason, Mr. Walsh cheerfully acquiesced. And here the business should have rested. But unhappily the good woman could not keep her own secret. She imparted it to Mr. Wesley, who hated all secrets, and could keep none. Michael Fenwick spread it abroad; and circumstances were so misrepresented, that Thomas Walsh fell into great and undeserved reproach. His preachings, fastings, hard studies, and the incessant labours of a mind, which, like a sharp sword, cuts its scabbard, had brought him far into a consumption. He wished to breathe his native air, and for a while to repose, until he could again resume his labours. He was to embark at Bristol: after preaching till he was bathed in perspiration, Mr. C. Wesley, to whom every exaggerated report had been made, took him out to walk in private, in a keen east wind. There he got a violent cold, and was distressed beyond measure to

be told, that his conduct, in the transaction I have reported, had done more harm to religion than his life and labours had honoured it. Under these trying circumstances of mind, and dangerous state of health, he embarked for Ireland. There he found very unkind family friends, who would dispute with a dying man. His physicians proved unskilful; and as they could do nothing for him, they declined doing what he proposed. Depressed by disease, labouring under unmerited reproach, severely judged by some he best loved, and grieved to the soul to think that religion should be stabbed through his side, his faith fainted, his patience forsook him, and he complained bitterly, 'his physicians were ignorant and his friends cruel.' Now was the hour of the power of darkness. Satan, who had often fallen before the lightning of his doctrine, and who could not stand against his praying faith, rallied his broken powers, and led them, reinforced by the black troops of death, to a final conflict.

"The God of patient Job permitted his malice to accuse, and his subtlety for a while to stagger, his dying servant. Driven to the brink of despair, his eye was still raised to Him 'who was lifted up to draw all men to Him.' Again joy beamed from his eye, and lighted up his ghastly countenance: he sprang up in his bed, clasped his hands together, and exclaimed, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am His!' Thus died this brave soldier of Jesus Christ."—*Melville Horne.*

Such is Mr. Horne's account; and, in the absence of contrary evidence, its general accuracy may be admitted, especially as Mr. John Wesley says, "There were some circumstances, not commonly

known, which easily account for the darkness he went through before he went to paradise." But the view which it gives of Charles Wesley's conduct in the affair is unquestionably at variance with fact. The most fastidious censor could not find in the part which Mr. Walsh acted any just ground of blame. He understood that the lady was a widow; and when he was told that he was in error, he immediately acquiesced in her decision, and withdrew his suit. What could he do more? To reprove a dying man, who had long given proof of the utmost purity of character, for a mere mistake, as if he had been guilty of immorality, would have been an outrage upon every principle of charity, justice, and humanity. Happily for Mr. Charles Wesley's memory, we have direct proof that he did not treat his afflicted friend in the cruel and unfeeling manner which is imputed to him. On the contrary, as might have been expected, considering the kindness of his heart, he did everything in his power to soothe and cheer the suffering man, whose extraordinary abilities, and high moral worth, he duly appreciated. During Mr. Walsh's stay in Bristol, he showed him every mark of attention and tender sympathy; he corresponded with him in the same spirit after Mr. Walsh had gone to Ireland; and, by his affectionate letters, he greatly alleviated the pain and anguish which he could not remove. Of this we have the most unexceptionable proof,—the testimony of Mr. Walsh himself. Two letters, written by him from Ireland, and addressed to Mr. Charles Wesley, have been preserved, as if on purpose to disprove Mr. Horne's injurious allegation; and, as they illustrate this part of Mr. Walsh's personal history, as well as that of his friend, they are here given entire. The first was written just

after the afflicted man had left Bristol ; the other, six months later.

“CORK, *April 17th*, 1758.

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“GOD has all power ; therefore we arrived safe here on the Saturday next after I left Bristol. We were tossed with tempest ; I may say, a day and a night in the deep ; for the sea ran over the vessel. But, as you prayed, Jesus was in the ship. He was my support, and did strengthen and comfort my heart. O that I could praise and love Him, and live more to the glory of His name ! Trials make Christ precious to us.

“Dear sir, how shall I sufficiently thank you for all your kindness ? I know it is God that gave us union and love. To the prayer of faith nothing is impossible. I trust love will abound.

“Mr. Hopper is here, and is well, and God has prospered him. Mr. Wesley is still in Dublin, but intends to leave it next week.

“It would give me a singular pleasure to hear from you, and to hear dear Mrs. Wesley and the child are well. When you write to her, I request you would give my best respects, and to any of those good friends I saw at your house, especially Mrs. Grinfield. I find such union with Bristol people as I never found before ; and as to London saints, they are written in my mind. Yet it is very uncertain whether I shall see them till the resurrection of the just. If you please to write to me, direct for me at Mr. Thomas Jones’s, merchant, in Cork.

“Dear sir, requesting your prayers and service, I am your truly affectionate and dutiful son.”

“ROSSMEAD, *October 9th*, 1758.

“REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,

“YOUR letter was very refreshing to me ; and while I read it the power of God rested on me. But truly I am ashamed that you should speak in such language to me. It is certain I pray earnestly for you, being moved thereto, not by a mere sense of duty, but by hearty love, and a remembrance of your kindness.

“My spiritual state is this : First, I have a constant assurance of the favour of God. Secondly, a steadfast confidence that my present afflictions will work together for my good. Thirdly, that whenever God calls me hence, Jesus will receive my spirit. Fourthly, I am tried to the uttermost. All the grace God has given me can hardly bear the pains I feel. Indeed, my soul is often sorrowful. I grieve, though not enough, that my love to God is so little ; and that I do not desire more earnestly to be with Christ. Yet I live by faith, and constantly pray for submission and thankfulness. In prayer my soul is often enlarged ; and I am led much to pray that the God of patience and consolation would give all His children to be likeminded : I mean, chiefly, that they should love one another. Ah, Lord ! why do not Thy children love and agree, as Thou hast given them commandment, and even prayed that they should ? When will Thy prayer be answered ? Well, blessed Jesus, we shall agree in Thy presence.

“It is long since I wrote a letter ; but you have constrained me. I am worse and worse as to my disorder. I have a violent cough, profuse night-sweats, a high and almost continual fever, wind in my stomach. Finally, every part is pained in its turn.

But to this day the Lord has not shown me clearly whether this sickness be unto death. O that I may be always ready!

“My strength fails me. I can only add a thousand loves and respects to my friends at Bristol. Upon you, my dear sir, and the kind wife of your bosom, and all that belong to you, may the blessing of God for ever abide! Shall I hear again from you?”

“I am, Rev. Sir, your affectionate son.

“P.S.—Dear Sir, Excuse me for putting you to cost. I could not get a frank here; and I was afraid, if I sent the letter by London, you would not receive it for a long time, if at all. O, forget not to pray for me! I believe really you do make intercession for me. I often, with pleasure, told my friends, Mr. Charles Wesley prays for me; yea, and sings a verse for me too.”

Such was the grateful and devout language of this great man, drawn forth by the Christian affection and sympathy of Mr. Charles Wesley. The statement of Mr. Horne, viewed in connexion with these letters, affords a striking illustration of the uncertainty of oral tradition, especially when various parties are concerned in the transmission of a report. That Thomas Walsh's distress, in his last illness, was at all occasioned by any severity and unkindness of Charles Wesley, is here positively disproved. He was one of the truest friends on whom Thomas Walsh could rely in the hour of trial; and the high estimate that he formed of Walsh's character is further shown in the subjoined hymns, which he wrote on the occasion of Mr. Walsh's death.

HYMN I.

PART I.

- 1 God of unfathomable grace,
Unsearchable to mortal sight,
Faithful and just are all Thy ways ;
Whatever is from Thee is right.
In wisdom and mysterious love,
Thou hast revoked the blessing given ;
Thy will be done beneath, above,
Thy name adored in earth and heaven.
- 2 A zealous instrument of good,
A vessel fit for use Divine,
Thy mercy on Thy church bestow'd,
And gave the burning light to shine :
Thy grace had first prepared his heart,
Dispell'd the Babylonish gloom,
And bid his early youth depart
The camp of Antichristian Rome.
- 3 Drawn by a secret power, he flew,
(Nor stay'd to prop the Papal throne,)
The truth determined to pursue,
And panting for a God unknown :
By works of legal righteousness
He blindly sought the grace to' obtain,
But could not find the paths of peace,
But labour'd through the fire in vain.
- 4 While thus he toil'd, a sudden cry
Proclaim'd the' approaching multitude :
They told of Jesus passing by,
Of free redemption in His blood :
Upstart, like the beggar blind,
He sprang the healing touch to meet,
Cast all his filthy rags behind,
And groan'd for faith at Jesu's feet.

- 5 The' incarnate God his sight restored,
 With faith the heart-felt pardon gave ;
 And raised him up to preach his Lord,
 So willing all mankind to save :
 By Christ Himself ordain'd and sent,
 A herald of redeeming grace,
 Eager to the highways he went,
 And fill'd the land with Jesu's praise.
- 6 But lo ! the soul-ensnaring fiend,
 Soon as the stripling's course began,
 Urged him for trifles to contend,
 And turn'd aside to janglings vain.
 Not long : for soon his upright heart
 Retrieved its momentary loss,
 Resolved its utmost powers to' exert,
 And only glory in the Cross.
- 7 His course impetuous who can tell,
 While battling with the' infernal foe ?
 He puts forth all his strength and zeal,
 He spends his life at every blow !
 Or fierce on the Philistines flies,
 Compels the captives to come in ;
 Spoils Satan of his lawful prize,
 And tears them from the toils of sin.
- 8 Refreshing, soft, as vernal showers,
 His word on weary sinners falls ;
 Or like the rapid torrent pours,
 While souls to Jesu's blood he calls ;
 With strength and utterance from above,
 Drives on the saints, through grace forgiven,
 To scale the mount of holiest love,
 To seize the brightest throne in heaven.

PART II.

- 1 WHILE Christ with all his heart he sought,
 And all his gifts from Christ received,
 A witness of the truths he taught,
 A pattern to the flock he lived ;

Them by his bright example led,
The power of godliness to prove,
In word, in converse, and in deed,
In faith, in purity, and love.

- 2 Did he not labour day and night,
In ministerial works employ'd?
His sweet relief, his whole delight,
To search the oracles of God;
To listen at the Master's feet,
To catch the whispers of His grace,
And long for happiness complete,
And gasp to see His open face!
- 3 Did he not triumph in the Cross,
Its prints as on his body show,
Lavish of life for Jesu's cause,
Whose blood so free for him did flow?
He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of its swift decline;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To' attain the righteousness Divine.
- 4 Impatient to be truly great,
Ambitious of a crown above,
He coveted the highest seat,
He ask'd the grace of perfect love:
He ask'd, alas! but knew not then
The purport of his own desire,
How deep that cup of sacred pain,
How searching that baptismal fire!
- The Lord allow'd his bold request;
The servant *is* call'd forth to share
That anguish of a wounded breast,
Those pangs which only God could bear;
Who drank, in His sad days of flesh,
The potion by His Father given,
And bids His members feel afresh
The fierceness of the wrath of Heaven.

- 6 A taste of that mysterious cup
 His faithful follower now received,
 And fill'd his Lord's afflictions up,
 While grief beyond conception grieved :
 His agonizing *soul* sweat blood,
 With Christ he fainted on the tree,
 And cried in death, " My God, my God,
 Ah ! why hast Thou forsaken me ? "
- 7 Tried to the last, but not forsook,
 But honour'd with distinguish'd grace,
 Heavenward he cast a dying look,
 And saw once more his Saviour's face :
 " He's come ! my well-beloved," he said,
 " And I am His, and He is mine ! "
 He spake ; he gazed ; and bow'd his head,
 And sunk into the arms Divine.
- 8 Shout all the first-born church above,
 His full triumphant entrance there ;
 Shout, all on earth, whom Jesu's love
 Hath call'd His cross and crown to share.
 Our calling, Lord, we calmly see,
 Our burden joyfully sustain,
 And die through one dark hour with Thee,
 With Thee eternally to reign.

HYMN II.

- 1 GLORY, and thanks, and love,
 And everlasting praise,
 Ascribe to God, who reigns above,
 Supreme in power and grace ;
 To His co-equal Son,
 The dear-bought sinners' Friend,
 Jesus, who freely loves His own,
 And loves them to the end.
- 2 To God the Comforter,
 The earnest and the seal
 The witness of our sonship here,
 The gift unspeakable :

To the great Triune God,
Be ceaseless honours given,
Till Christ, descending on the cloud,
Turns all our earth to heaven.

3 He bids us now partake
Our fellow-servant's bliss,
Whose soul returns in safety back
From life's tempestuous seas ;
Who, driven and toss'd no more,
No more o'erwhelm'd, opprest,
Claps his glad wings, escaped to shore,
To the Redeemer's breast.

4 He sees the trial past,
He leaves the storm behind,
To his triumphant Head at last
Inseparably join'd :
Shout all the hosts above,
When Jesus saith, " Well done,"
And deigns His servant's faith to' approve,
And seats him on the throne.

5 Thanks be to God, who gave
The victory and the prize !
Join, all who own His power to save,
The triumph of the skies !
The church of the first-born,
To them by faith we come,
And conquerors of the world, return
To our celestial home.

6 We know in whom we trust,
We haste to His embrace,
Mix'd with the spirits of the just,
The perfected in grace ;
Their ripest joy to share,
Exulting we ascend,
And grasp our old companions there,
And our eternal Friend.

HYMN III.

- 1 'Tis finish'd, 'tis past,
His conflict below,
The sharpest and last
He ever shall know!
The fiery temptation
Hath spent all its fires,
The heir of salvation
With triumph expires.
- 2 The buffeting fiend,
Who push'd him so sore,
And bruised to the end,
Shall bruise him no more:
He trod on his bruiser,
And more than subdued
Our hellish accuser,
Through Jesus's blood.
- 3 Depress'd by the cross,
He mounted the higher,
He left all his dross
And tin in the fire;
He brought, by his mourning,
The Comforter down,
And Jesus returning
Presented the crown.
- 4 All praise to the Lord!
All praise is His due;
His merciful word
Is tried, and found true:
Who His dereliction
On Calvary bear,
And share His affliction,
His kingdom shall share.
- 5 O Saviour, to Thee
Our souls we commend,
If, nail'd to the tree,
We bleed to the end:

We bear the full anguish,
The uttermost load ;
But give us to languish,
And suffer like God.

- 6 Remember us, then,
And answer our call,
When turning with pain
Our face to the wall ;
In trouble stand by us,
Till all is o'erpast,
And chasten, and try us,
But save us at last.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN MURLIN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in the parish of St. Stephen, in Cornwall, in the year 1722. I was mostly employed in the farming business till I was twelve years of age. My father died before I was thirteen; and I hope died in peace.

I was then desirous to learn the business of a carpenter; and, accordingly, at Michaelmas, 1735, was bound apprentice to one. My master lived utterly without God in the world; he was much given to swearing, and taking God's name in vain; and I too readily followed his bad example, and was much addicted to that vice.

At Michaelmas, 1742, my apprenticeship expired. I then wrought with another master three or four years, with whom I made some progress both in my business and in my learning; applying myself in the day-time to my trade, and in the evening to writing and accounts. But all this time I was an enemy to God and to my own soul. Indeed, at times I had convictions of sin, and some concern about my future

state. But being surrounded by those who had no thought of God, and having no one to direct me, I quickly stifled my convictions, and became worse than I was before. To cursing and swearing I soon added gaming, and, soon after, drunkenness. Lord! how great is Thy mercy, in sparing those that live in open rebellion against Thee!

In February, 1749, I heard the Methodist preachers. I was soon brought under deep conviction on account of my numerous sins: the remembrance of them was grievous to me; the burden of them was intolerable. I grudged myself the food I ate; I thought a burned crust was too good for me. "The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, and His hand pressed me sore." I frequently kneeled at my bed-side, and wrestled with God in prayer till midnight; and sometimes I was afraid to lie down in bed, lest I should awake in hell. At other times, I fell on the ground, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart. Yea, and when I heard the preachers speak of the love of Christ, and of His willingness to save poor lost sinners, it fixed my convictions the deeper, to think I should be such a rebel against so loving a Saviour.

In April I heard Mr. Downes preach on part of the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. Under this sermon I found a great deliverance. My burden was taken away. And from this day I never found that distress which I had felt before. But I was not fully satisfied that my sins were forgiven, though I read and prayed, and used all the other means of grace, at all opportunities.

I had now a calm serenity in my soul, and often much peace and joy; but I wanted a clearer manifestation of the pardoning love of God. And this

He was pleased to give me soon after, under the preaching of Richard Trather, a local preacher. I could then indeed say, "Lord, Thine anger is turned aside, and Thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." And although, since then, I have met with sore trials, and sometimes have been brought very low; yet, blessed be God, I have never lost my confidence, and I trust I never shall.

Some time after this, Mr. William Roberts, then the travelling preacher in our Circuit, told me I must take care of the little class which met near the place where I lived. I was struck with fear, and went out of the room, telling him I could not undertake it. But he insisted upon it, and, as the people desired I should, I at last complied; and yet with fear and trembling, as I thought there were some in the class whose abilities were far superior to mine.

In order to qualify myself a little better for the employ, I bought a large Bible, with some other books, and applied myself to prayer, and reading, chiefly the holy Scriptures. And it pleased God to open my understanding more and more, to see the wondrous things of His word.

But about this time I was often beset by some disputatious Anabaptists, endeavouring to prove unconditional election. I asked them, "Can this stand without absolute reprobation? And if God from eternity determined the end, namely, the damnation of the reprobates, did He not also determine their sins, as the means to it? But, in saying this, do you not make God the author of all the sin that ever was committed? And, if so, is He not the author of all the sins of devils, as well as of men?"

I now met my class constantly, to whom I sometimes gave a word of exhortation. And I never found myself more happy than when I was among the children of God.

There were at this time in the neighbourhood several local preachers; but they had more places to preach at on a Sunday than they could possibly supply. One of them, Thomas Randall, came to me, and said, "The people are starving for want of bread; and can you withhold it from them? The Lord has put it into your hand: but you are not a good steward; otherwise you would dispense to all their portion of meat in due season." His words made a deep impression on my mind; and though I put him off for the present, yet I could not shake off a continual fear lest I was burying my talent in the earth.

Some time after this, preaching had been appointed at a neighbouring place, and no preacher was at liberty to go. I was in a strait, not knowing what to do. At length I came to this resolution, "I will go this once, and see whether I am enabled to speak to the people or not; and then I shall be better satisfied, either to speak again or to be silent." So I set out with a trembling heart. When I came to the place, there were more people than the house would contain: this obliged them to carry out the stand. I got upon it with fear and trembling, gave out a hymn, and went to prayer, wherein I found unexpected liberty. I then read those words, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts iii. 19.) It pleased God to give me to speak with a free heart, and with a ready tongue. The people gave great

attention to the word, and tears ran down many cheeks. I hope the good impressions were not soon effaced; for when I was last in Cornwall, (in July, 1777,) some of the people remembered what they heard that day.

Not long after, I was appointed to labour in conjunction with several other local preachers. And though my abilities were not large, yet God gave me favour in the eyes of the people; and it pleased Him to make the plain words I spoke a blessing to many souls.

At this time the world began to smile upon me. Living with my mother, my board cost me nothing; I got much money at my business; and I had a rich uncle, who always expressed a peculiar regard for me; and it was expected, whenever he died, he would leave me the greatest part of his substance. Being in so agreeable a situation in the midst of my Christian friends, I built me a house in the parish of St. Mewan, in order to fix my tabernacle.

Just then I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wesley, inquiring if I was willing to be a travelling preacher; and, if I was, desiring me to go into the west of Cornwall. I wrote back my objections: 1. That my aged mother desired I would not leave her. 2. That not only my relations, but my Christian friends, were unwilling to part with me. And, 3. That, though I might be of some use among my neighbours, yet my abilities were not equal to so great a work. Mr. Wesley soon sent me a second letter, which fully answered all my objections. So, after a short struggle in my mind, I resolved to give up all for Christ; and, accordingly, on October 12th, 1754, I took my horse, and, without delay, rode away into the west of Cornwall.

I laboured in various parts of England, from this time till September 15th, 1756. Then I embarked with Captain Davis for Ireland, with four other preachers; two of whom, I trust, James Massiot and Nicholas Gilbert, are safe landed in paradise.

The next year I embarked at Dublin with Lawrence Coughlan, landed at Parkgate, and rode up to the Conference in London. Thence I went to Whitehaven, where I was much blessed, both in my soul and in my labours. Here I met with a companion, who for three or four years was inseparable from me. His name was Benjamin Biggs, a favourite servant of the late Sir James Lowther: with him I embarked in July, 1758, for Liverpool. But the captain deceived us, and carried us to the Isle of Man. Here we stayed a week. The second evening I preached in a large barn. But on Sunday it would not contain the congregation; so I was obliged to preach abroad. The people in general behaved well, and gave great attention. After I left them, some of them sent to Whitehaven, desiring to have another preacher. But it was some years before another preacher went, there being so little probability of doing any considerable good, while the whole island was a nest of smugglers. The Duke of Athol was then king of the isle; but the case is now widely altered. Since it has been purchased of the duke, and united to the crown of England, that detestable trade is rooted out. A considerable part of the island is cultivated. At one part of it, a herring-fishery is established; at another, a large linen-manufactory. And we now see the fruit of our labours there, in the conversion of many sinners to God.

From August, 1767, to August, 1768, I was in the Bristol Circuit. There was this year a very

remarkable increase of the work of God in Kingswood. Above an hundred and sixty members were added to the society; and thirteen or fourteen children at the school were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. But which of these will endure to the end?

When I look back on the many years I have now spent in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God, though I have not made that advancement in His ways which I might have done, yet I can say, to His glory, He hath so kept me, that none can lay anything to my charge with regard to my moral conduct, since God first spoke peace to my soul, in April, 1749.

I am clearly convinced that God has called me to preach His everlasting Gospel. And the more, because it has pleased Him by His Spirit to confirm the word of His messenger. Indeed, I am fully persuaded that He does confirm the word of all whom He hath sent, by turning sinners, through them, "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

And I believe that Christ "is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through Him." I cannot credit them who are continually telling the people that the Canaanite must dwell in the land to humble them; that is, Belial must be a partner with Christ in His work; as though Christ was not sufficient to humble the souls of God's children, without calling in sin and the devil to His assistance.

I bless God, my heart is engaged in His work; and there is nothing gives me greater satisfaction than to hear of the prosperity of Sion. Yet how much longer I shall be able to travel I cannot tell, as I

have a settled rheumatism in my knee and thigh, and am far past the meridian of life. But, in all circumstances, I have chosen God for my portion, and the lot of my inheritance for ever. He hath been my helper hitherto; and I trust He will help to the end. O Lord! forsake me not in my old age. Lay Thine everlasting arms beneath me; and give me a safe and comfortable passage through the valley of the shadow of death; and bring me to Thy holy hill, to praise Thy name for evermore!

Meantime, I bless God, I can say to His glory, I do find constant communion with Him. And I pay no regard to those who tell us, "You must come from the mount; and you must not mind your frames and feelings." No! If I have the peace of God, do I not feel it? If I do not feel it, I have it not. And if I do not feel joy in the Holy Ghost, it does not exist. And shall I not feel it more and more, if I go on from faith to faith; if I daily "grow in grace," (as I trust I shall,) "and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

August 1st, 1779.

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
DEATH OF MR. JOHN MURLIN,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

To the Editor of the "Methodist Magazine."

LEEDS, *October 4th*, 1799.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE are exhorted in the sacred Scriptures, to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises;" and, accordingly, we not only see their exemplary faith, piety, and zeal described in the word of God, but also much of their experience is recorded there. In them we behold the mercy and lovingkindness, as well as the truth and faithfulness, of the blessed God, wonderfully manifested; and hence we are encouraged to believe that, as He is no respecter of persons, He will deal with us in the same gracious manner that He dealt with them. It is also matter of great consolation, that the Lord hath not left Himself without witnesses in our day, that "His mercy endureth for ever, and His faithfulness and His truth throughout all generations." Very many have, through His infinite mercy and love, been enabled to testify His goodness both in life and death.

I make no doubt but thousands can heartily praise the Lord for the many scriptural and rational accounts published in the "Methodist Magazine," of pious persons who, in life and death, had experienced the accomplishment of the promises of God, in giving

them, not only a clear sense of His pardoning love, but also an earnest of eternal glory ; so that death, though justly called the "king of terrors," was not terrible to them, but, on the contrary, was a messenger of peace. I am likewise well persuaded, that our people in general have read with pleasure and profit the accounts in the Magazine of the Lord's gracious dealings with the preachers of His blessed Gospel ; as they see, in those plain narratives, that He not only made them ministers of His word, but witnesses of those important truths which they have with diligence and zeal enforced upon the people. For my own part, I heartily praise God on account of those preachers who, with a single eye to His glory, have favoured us with their Christian experience, as I am well assured that it has been attended with a peculiar blessing. Indeed, some of our brethren object to this, and tell us, that it will be soon enough to publish their experience and manner of life when they have finished their warfare, lest they should fall away from their steadfastness, and bring a reproach on their profession. It is certain, that there is no necessity for any one to fall away. And I greatly rejoice in this, that very few of those persons whose experience has been published have, since that time, given us cause to be ashamed of them ; but, on the contrary, we have good reason to bless the Lord on their behalf, who has enabled them, with their latest breath, to bear witness to the truth which, through life, they had published in His name.

In the Magazine for 1779, page 530, we have some particulars of the life and ministry of Mr. John Murlin. He hath now finished his earthly course, and entered into the joy of His Lord ; and, as I was intimately acquainted with him for many years, I

make no doubt but it will be acceptable to thousands, who formerly attended his ministry, to hear some farther account of him.

I first became acquainted with Mr. Murlin in 1765, when we laboured together in the Birstal Circuit. Afterwards we were stationed in London, in 1770; in Bristol, in 1771; in London again, in 1779; in Bristol, in 1781; and in Manchester, in 1784: so that I knew him well. During all these years I saw nothing in him that I could reprove. His truly Christian temper, as well as his exemplary conduct, bore witness that he walked with God. The more I knew him, the more fully I was satisfied of his sincerity, integrity, and uprightness of mind. He certainly had the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, very much at heart, or he would not have continued his public labours as an itinerant preacher so long as he did. I am inclined to think that very few who have it in their power, as he had, to retire, and live comfortably upon the property which God has given them, would continue to struggle with the heavy afflictions which he endured, in travelling in all sorts of weather to preach the Gospel: but he had an affecting view of what his Lord and Saviour had suffered for him, and was satisfied of his call to the ministry; he therefore resolved to labour in this blessed work, till by hard necessity he should be obliged to leave it. About the year 1786, being no longer able to keep a Circuit, he retired to High-Wycomb, where he spent the remaining part of his days. Here he faithfully laboured in preaching the word of life, as opportunity and his strength would permit. The Lord made him a blessing to many, and he was much esteemed by the people.

Having been for many years greatly afflicted with

have a settled rheumatism in my knee and thigh, and am far past the meridian of life. But, in all circumstances, I have chosen God for my portion, and the lot of my inheritance for ever. He hath been my helper hitherto; and I trust He will help to the end. O Lord! forsake me not in my old age. Lay Thine everlasting arms beneath me; and give me a safe and comfortable passage through the valley of the shadow of death; and bring me to Thy holy hill, to praise Thy name for evermore!

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Having been for many years greatly afflicted with

a rheumatic complaint, the disorder continued to increase very much upon him, attended with such stiffness in his joints, that it was with the utmost difficulty he could walk at all, or get up into the pulpit. But he bore all his afflictions with humble resignation, and patiently waited for that great and solemn change which the men of the world so much dread. Last winter he came to London, and preached, for the last time, a very useful sermon, in Great Queen-street chapel, where I had the satisfaction to hear my long-tried and faithful friend once more bear a faithful testimony for his blessed Master. Soon after his return home, (about February,) at his earnest request, I visited him, and found him in a dying state. He had had a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of the use of all his limbs, except his right hand, which he could use a little, and but a little. He was exceedingly happy in the love of God, waiting in joyful expectation of being speedily called to the full enjoyment of everlasting happiness. He wanted to settle a considerable sum of money, for the benefit of that Society; and when he had done this, he could say, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word." It was a very affecting sight, to see his amiable partner, on the one hand, quite turned into a child, by a paralytic stroke; on the other hand, Mr. Murlin deprived of the use of all his limbs, by the same disorder. Lord, what is man? How weak, how helpless! Who can tell what he may be called to suffer, or to what a low estate he may be reduced before he leaves this world? O, how needful to improve our health and strength, and our understanding, while we are blessed with them! Helpless as he was, he had not much pain, but was

very cheerful, and perfectly sensible. He said, "I bless the Lord, I have not the shadow of a doubt;" and added, before I left him, "I begin to fear that death is not quite so near as I expected:" and so it proved, for he lived till July following. He conversed very freely with me respecting the state of our Connexion, and expressed the most affectionate concern for its prosperity. When I was coming away, he called me back, and desired that I would take care of his corpse when he should be brought to London. This was done according to his request; and he was buried in the same vault with Mr. Wesley, at the City-Road chapel.

He bore his affliction (which greatly increased upon him) to the last with great patience, and continued innocently cheerful, and exceedingly happy, till it pleased God to sign his release, and to call him to the regions of everlasting rest and peace.

Thus died Mr. John Murlin; having faithfully laboured in the vineyard of the Lord about forty-six years. Of him it might be said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." As I laboured with him six years, I knew him well, and think it my duty to bear this testimony of his uprightness, integrity, and zeal for the glory of God and salvation of precious souls, his diligence in the work unto which the Lord had called him, and his faithfulness in fulfilling the important duties of that high and honourable station in which Providence had placed him. He was a Methodist of the primitive stamp, in heart and life, in doctrine and discipline. He was an instrument in the Lord's hand of turning many to righteousness: for, as his heart was in the work, he was generally so deeply affected with the truths he delivered, that he seldom could refrain from tears; and

this frequently had a good effect upon many of his hearers. During the time that we were stationed together, we laboured in perfect harmony, and never had the smallest jar respecting anything; but the more intimately we were acquainted with each other, the more closely were we united in the bonds of Christian love. As he laboured long, and suffered much, so now he receives a full reward in the kingdom of immortal glory; and no doubt he has met with many in those peaceful regions who were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his ministry, who will be his crown of rejoicing for ever.

Thus we see one and another of our highly-esteemed brethren gathered to their fathers in peace. May we follow them as they followed Christ, till we also finish our course with joy! So prays your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN PAWSON.

“THE saints who die of Christ possess
Enter into immediate rest;
For them no farther test remains,
Of purging fires and torturing pains.

“Who trusting in their Lord depart,
Cleansed from all sin, and pure in heart,
The bliss unmix'd, the glorious prize,
They find with Christ in paradise.

“Close follow'd by their works they go,
Their Master's purchased joy to know:
Their works enhance the bliss prepared,
And each hath its distinct reward.

“Yet glorified by grace alone,
They cast their crowns before the throne,
And fill the echoing courts above
With praises of redeeming love.”

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN MASON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

MOTCOMB, NEAR SHAFTESBURY,
August 31st, 1780.

REV. SIR,

I AM a person who has neither ability nor inclination to say much of myself; being desirous to be little and unknown.

Nevertheless, if this short account of the mercy of God to a sinner may be of the least use to any, all the praise shall be given to Him, by whose grace I am what I am: for I always desire to bear in mind that testimony of St. Paul, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

I was born in the year of our Lord 1733, in the parish of Hambledon, about eight miles from Portsmouth. When I was about four years old, my father died; and, soon after, my mother. Such was the order of Divine Providence, that I had but little

knowledge of, or help from, them; but almighty goodness provided for me.

When my mother died, I was removed to Portsmouth Common, by the care of her own sister, the wife of Mr. Richard Libbard, who had lived there in good credit for many years; and I was to them as their own child.

I believe my aunt lived in the fear of God, and, according to the light she had, endeavoured to breed me up in a religious manner. I have great reason to be thankful to God on her account. Many of her instructions I remember to this day with much comfort; and I have not a doubt but that she is now in Abraham's bosom.

Yet, notwithstanding all the care that was taken of me, I gave way to evil, and did many things contrary to the word of God; on account of which I remember to have felt many sharp convictions before I was ten years of age. I was often alarmed with the fear of death and judgment. I trembled at the thought of being cast into the fire of hell. At those times I frequently went alone, and prayed that God would have mercy upon me, and save me from my sins. As I grew up, I saw more and more into the evil of sin. But although I truly hated sin, I was often overcome by it, which abundantly increased my pain and sorrow.

But it was by hearing a sermon of Mr. Whitefield's, and those of a pious minister whose congregation I now attended, that my convictions deepened. I began to see myself as I never had done before, and to know I was a fallen child of Adam. I felt the burden with deep distress. My sleep departed from me, and I neglected to take my necessary food. I cried to God night and day. I longed for His sal-

vation. But I was afraid Christ did not die for me. When this persuasion prevailed, it cut me off. I was as one that had no hope. I cannot describe the anguish that tortured my poor soul. Sometimes I wished I had never been born; at other times, that I had been an idiot from my birth. And many times, such was my ignorance and the force of temptation, I complained against God for making me what I was.

While I was exercised in this gloomy, dejected manner, I one evening took up the New Testament to read; and I hope never to forget the time or place. As I read, I felt, I cannot tell how, an unusual going out after God and Christ. At once my eye, and all the powers of my soul, were fixed on those words: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. ii. 9.) The deep silence that rested on me gave way, and I broke out as in an ecstasy of joy, not regarding who might hear,

"For me He lived, and for me He died."

In a moment, all my burden of pain and sorrow fled away, and all my soul was filled with peace and joy. I was all love to God and man. Truly, my delight was in the Almighty; and I began to sing aloud,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!"

Happy would it have been for me, if I had been

careful to grow in the grace of God. But I gave way to a curious spirit, and puzzled myself with doubtful disputations; and by this means I gradually damped the grace of God, and cast the blessing away I had been entrusted with.

Soon after this, the Methodist preachers came to Portsmouth. I went to hear them, and the word was made profitable to me. I felt new desires, and was often much comforted; and I once more resolved to give up my body and soul a sacrifice to God. I was admitted into the society, by Mr. James Oddy. I continued to meet with them for some time; and many were the blessings I thereby received. But after a time a stumbling-block was laid in my way, and I left the society. But it was chiefly owing to my inexperience and want of patience. I ought to have minded one thing, whatever others did, and to have pressed on to the prize of our high calling.

After this I went on for five years in darkness, misery, and distress, yea, many times almost in despair; yet I constantly attended the preaching, and sometimes was permitted to stay at the meeting of the society. But when my much-esteemed friend, Mr. Robert Roberts, came into the Circuit, he was informed of me; for I believe both the preachers and people had a regard for me. He gave me a note of admittance again. May I never forget this mercy!

It was not long after, being at a prayer-meeting with a few friends, that I recovered the peace and love of God. My soul was humbled in the dust; I became solidly happy in God my Saviour. I was watchful, and spent much time in prayer; the word of God was my daily companion, and it was spirit and life to my soul. My faith was now strengthened; my love to God and man increased abun-

dantly. The Lord held me by my hand, and fed me with the bread of life. He gave me to drink of the water of the river of life, and I was happy all the day long. Such was the blessing I continually enjoyed. I lived near to God, keeping Jesus in my view, as my life, my pattern, and my all.

When Mr. Francis Gilbert appointed me to take care of a class, it was a great trial. But so much the more did the Lord make it a blessing to me. For while I prayed for my brethren, and laboured to help them forward in the way to the kingdom, He gave me great consolation in my own soul; and I began to feel a stronger desire for the salvation of poor sinners. I reproved, advised, and comforted, as opportunity served; being, at the same time, particularly careful over my own behaviour. Meantime, by the desire of my friends, I sometimes read a sermon, or some part of the "Christian Library." I did this first in our own society, and afterward in that of a neighbouring town. Sometimes also I ventured to give a few words of exhortation; and the people not only bore with my weakness, but urged me to do it more frequently. Some time after, I felt a strong conviction, that it was my duty to preach. I did so occasionally; and though it was with much weakness, fear, and trembling, the Lord owned my feeble attempts; the people were profited, and my own soul was helped forward in the grace of God. I advised with the Assistant and the other preachers; and, being encouraged by them, I went on therein, relying upon God, who giveth strength to them that have no might.

But I was not long satisfied with this. I found a stronger and stronger conviction, that it was my duty to give myself wholly up to the work of God, and to

commence an itinerant preacher. But I shrunk from the thought. I wept, and prayed, and strove against it with all my might, till I had well nigh lost all the life and peace of God out of my soul. Yet I did not comply; it was so contrary to the plan I had just laid down, having, as I supposed, settled myself for life. It was my desire and design to live and die amongst my first religious acquaintance, and then to lay my bones by the side of my dear and only brother, just torn from me by the hand of death.

But not being able to resist any longer, I laid the matter before Mr. Furz and the other preachers in the Circuit. They advised me to fight against God no more, but prepare myself against the next Conference. I did so, and attended at Bristol, in August, 1764. I can truly say, I had no other end in view but the glory of God and the good of souls. With regard to this world, I had all I wanted, and to spare. And I had a prospect of easily gaining much more, had I remained in my business, which was steady, and continually increasing. But this I gave up freely; nor have I repented of it one moment since. And if it were to do again, I believe I should do it with the same cheerfulness. For He is worthy of all my service who has bought me with His precious blood.

You, sir, were pleased to appoint me to labour in the York Circuit, with Mr. Furz and Mr. Pool. It was a year of much peace and comfort; and I resolved, in the strength of Christ, to continue spending, and being spent, in the blessed work to my life's end.

It is of little use to say in what parts of England, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, I have laboured; or how many persons have been convinced of sin, or

converted to God, or how many have been added to the societies, in the Circuits wherein I have laboured. Let it suffice, that this, and all I am, will be fully known in that great day. But I believe I may be permitted to mention, in the fear of God, that after sixteen years' labour, I do not know that either my principles or practice have given you, sir, or any of my brethren, cause to repent, for a moment, that you received me as a fellow-labourer in the house of God. And in this I am the same at this day as at the first: I still esteem it no small privilege to act with you, as a son in the Gospel, to be directed by you where, when, and how to act.

I bless God, I still daily enjoy a measure of His peace and love. But I am ashamed when I consider how little improvement I have made. I long to have everything taken from me that is not agreeable to the mind that was in Christ.

For many years I have been fully satisfied with regard to the doctrines of the Methodists; and in them I hope to live and die. But from the time that I recovered the favour of God, I have always been averse to disputing. I remember how much I suffered thereby in the beginning of my turning to God. And I believe it would be happy, if all the children of God would strive to agree as far as possible, and live in love as brethren, and strive to help each other in fighting the good fight of faith. This is the one desire, and I hope it will be the continual labour of,

Rev. Sir,

Your dutiful son in the Gospel,

JOHN MASON.

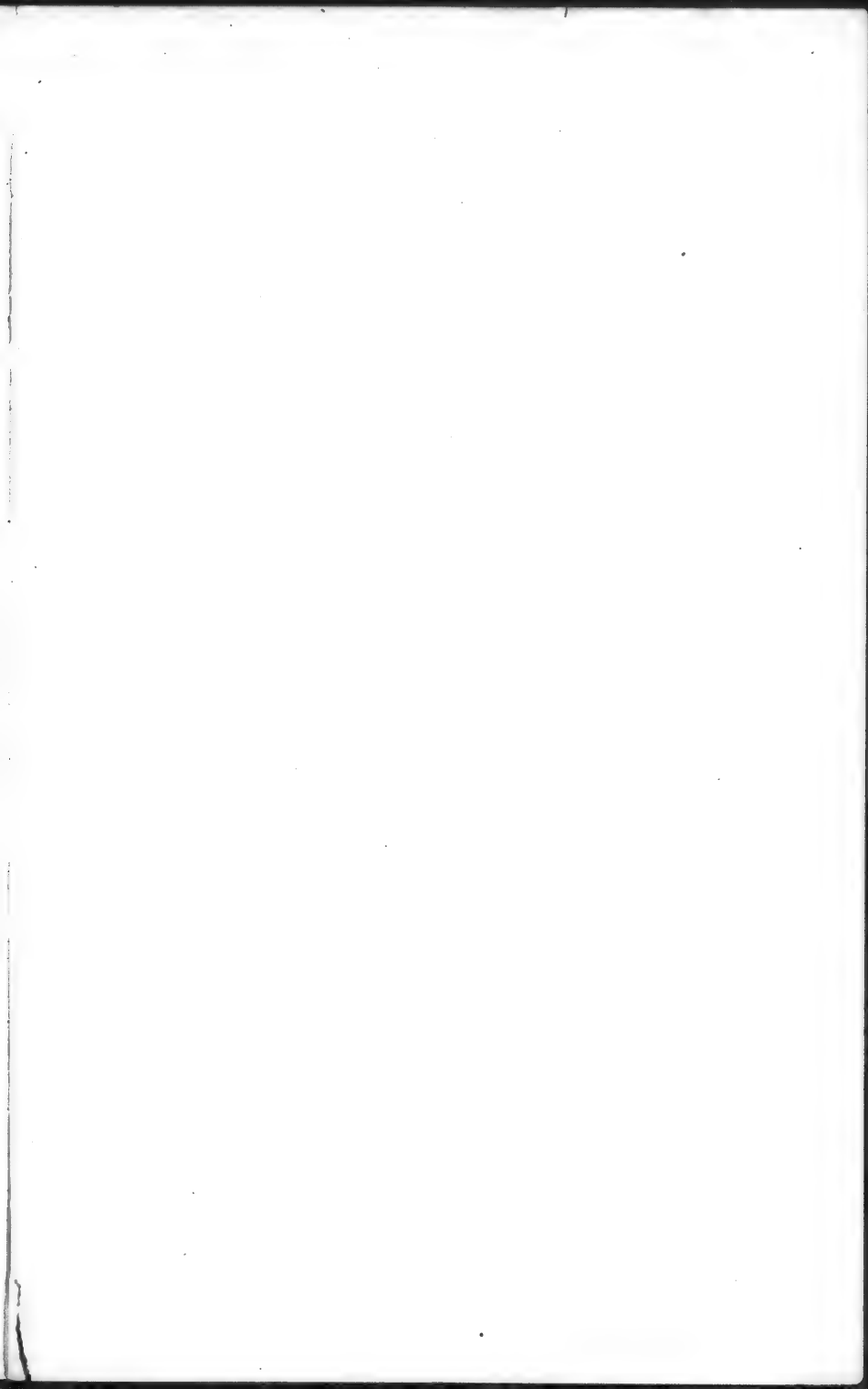
THE following account of Mr. Mason was given by the Methodist Conference in the year 1810:—

JOHN MASON died in the seventy-eighth year of his age. He continued to labour with great usefulness, approbation, and unblemished character, till the year 1797, when, owing to increasing infirmities, he was obliged to desist from a more active life, and confine his labours within a narrower sphere. He settled at West-Meon, a village near Portsmouth, from whence he used to visit the neighbouring societies, and supply the lack of the travelling preachers, when called away on necessary business: on these occasions his sermons were remarkably blessed to the people, and particularly those of his latter days. On April 22d, 1810, being Easter-Sunday, whilst worshipping in West-Meon church, he was taken ill, and continued to languish till the Friday following, when his spirit entered into the kingdom of God. A person who was intimately acquainted with him in all the relations in which he stood to society, and to the church of Christ, speaks of him in the following manner:—“When I say that Mr. Mason was a man, I use the word in its noblest sense. He made it the study of his life to maintain this character by cultivating his mind in every branch of useful knowledge within his reach; and his profiting was great. In the history of the world, and the history of the church, he was very extensively read. With anatomy and medicine he was well acquainted; and his knowledge of natural history, particularly of botany, was very extensive. In the latter science he was inferior to few in the British empire. His botanical collections would do credit to the first museum in Europe; and especially his collections of English plants, all gathered, pre-

served, classified, and described by himself. But this was his least praise. He laid all his attainments in natural sciences under contribution to his theological studies; nor could it ever be said, that he neglected his duty as a Christian minister, to cultivate his mind in philosophical pursuits. He was a Christian man, and in his life and spirit adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour. The decency, propriety, and dignity of his conduct, through the whole of his life, were truly exemplary. And his piety towards God, and his benevolence towards man, were as deep as they were sincere. I am constrained to add, 'He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again.'"

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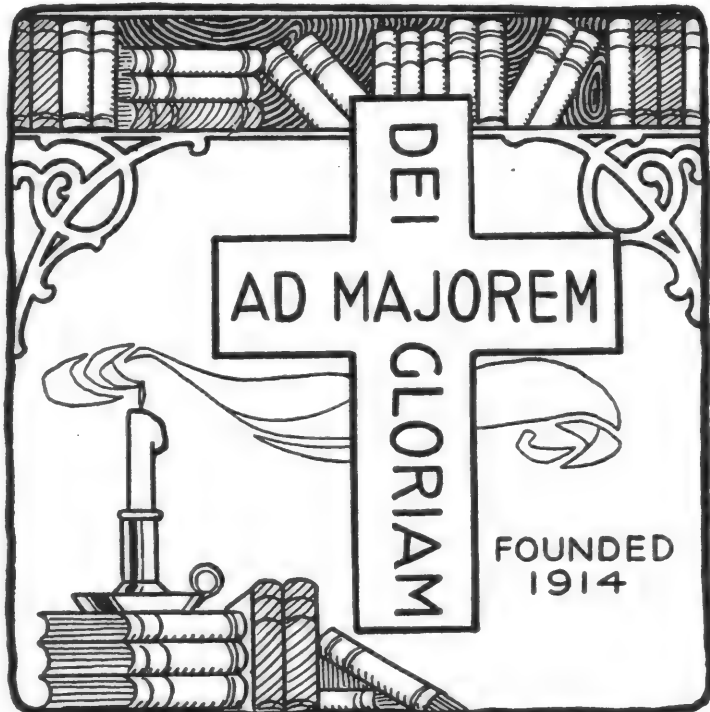
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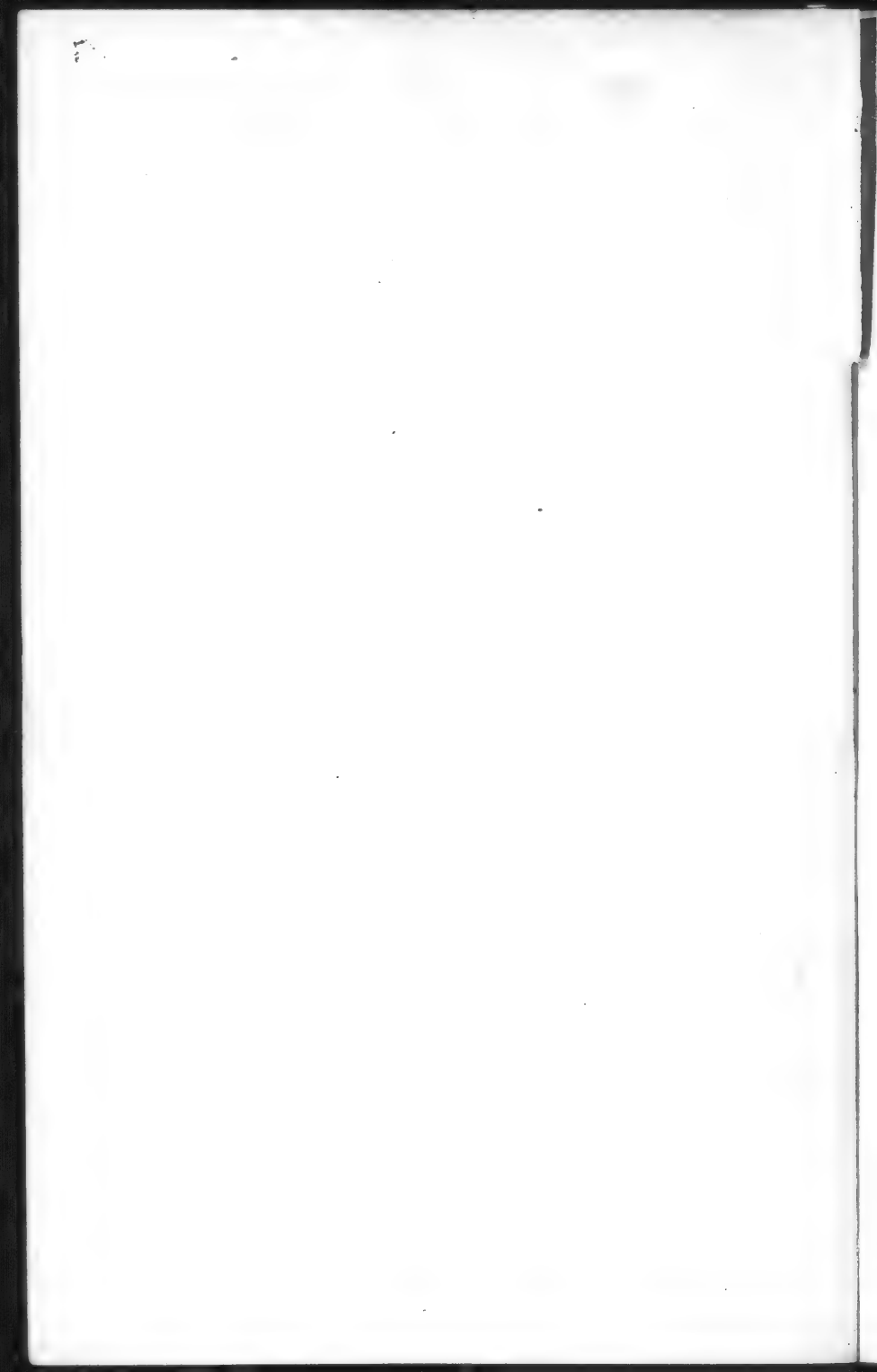
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THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,
IN SIX VOLUMES.

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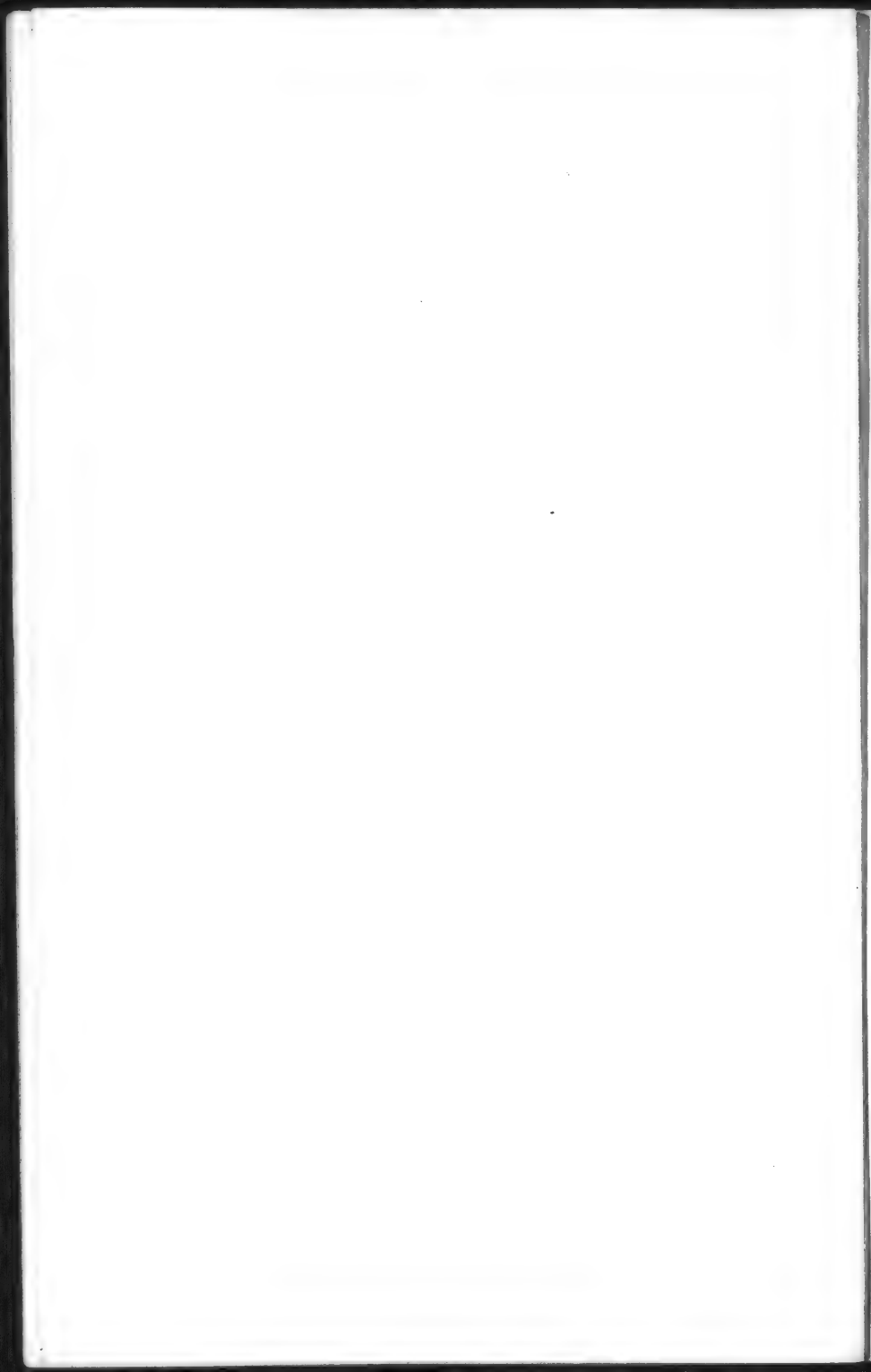
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THE LIFE

OF

MR. JOHN PAWSON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in a very obscure village, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, November 12th, 1737. My parents lived in good repute, were members of the Established Church, and constantly attended public worship ; but were entire strangers to the power of godliness. They possessed, however, some degree of the fear of God, and, according to the light they had, trained up all their children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord. They taught us to say our prayers, and repeat the Church Catechism, obliged us constantly to go to church, and would not suffer us to run into open sin. My father maintained his authority in his own house, and his word gave law to his children. I heartily bless God for this, as I am sensible that by this means I was kept from running into many and various evils, which I was exposed to in my childhood. At that time, alas ! we had not the Gospel preached in Thorner ; and, dreadful as it may appear, I am quite of opinion there was not a single person, man or woman, in the

place, who had any saving knowledge of God. The tree is known by its fruit; and I say this from a thorough acquaintance with the life and conversation of everyone in the parish.

As I was my father's first-born son, he had an uncommon affection for me, and gave me as good an education as his circumstances would allow. As I was intended for the building business, all my time was taken up in learning what was proper to fit me for that employment, especially architecture. When I was about fifteen years of age, I was sent to Hull, to learn my business with a brother-in-law. I was then remarkably serious, loved retirement, and kept no company, but went to the church constantly, and met on Sunday evenings with a society of well-disposed people, in the vestry-room of the High Church. Whether these people were acquainted with the power of godliness, I know not, as I was then an entire stranger to everything of that kind myself; nor do I remember that any particular impressions, of a spiritual nature, were made upon my mind; only I thought, "This is the way to serve God, and get safe to heaven." Indeed, I judged myself to be a very good Christian, and had not a doubt but, die when I would, I should be everlastingly happy with God in His kingdom.

When I was about eighteen years old, I fell in company with some people who had much conversation respecting the Methodists, against whom I was exceedingly prejudiced, believing them to be an ignorant, foolish, and wicked people: therefore I had not the least desire to be acquainted with them; nor had I so much curiosity as to wish to hear any of them preach, or to read any of their writings. One present strongly insisted that the Methodists,

in general, were a very pious people ; and, as a proof of it, said his wife was one of them ; that she attended the church twice every Lord's day, and received the holy sacrament every Sunday ; and that, on this account, they never cooked anything for dinner on that sacred day. I thought, "Then she must be a good Christian indeed," as going constantly to church and sacrament included the whole of religion, as far as I knew. This gave me a more favourable opinion of the Methodists, and I felt a desire to hear some of them. Accordingly, one evening, when I supposed they had preaching, I went ; but when I came to the door of that poor obscure place in which they then preached in Hull, it occurred to my mind, that I had never been in a Dissenting meeting-house in my life ; that I was a stranger to their way of worship ; that I should not know when to kneel down, or when to stand up, and I should be ashamed. I therefore walked round the house, and returned home, and thought no more of the Methodists for several years. At this time the light of the Gospel was well-nigh extinguished in Hull. But what a glorious change hath the Lord wrought in that town since then ! How highly are the inhabitants favoured with the light of Divine truth ! They can hear the Gospel in two or three churches, in several Dissenting meeting-houses, and in three Methodist chapels. At that time, a Methodist was held in supreme contempt, as that name implied everything that was low, mean, and despicable in the opinion of the world. But, through the infinite mercy of God, they are now better known ; and very differently thought of by great numbers of people.

In the year 1756 I began to follow my business at

Harewood, near Leeds. Here I fell in with a company of exceeding wild, vain, and wicked young men ; but the Lord mercifully preserved me from being led astray by them. I certainly was in extreme danger, as I was very intimate with one of very loose morals. We lodged together, and I had an uncommon attachment to him. He took every method he could think of to entice me into sin ; but all his attempts were in vain. Outward iniquity appeared odious to me ; and in the evening, when he was gone out, I generally sung a psalm, prayed to God, and, at a proper time, went quietly to bed. Still, however, I was as great a stranger to the nature of true religion as ever. I despised the Methodists, and seriously thought myself much wiser and better than any of them. At that time there was only one poor, aged woman in Harewood who was called a Methodist, and she died just at the time I was brought to the knowledge of the truth. On her death-bed she sent for one of her neighbours, and said, " This town will be visited with the Gospel : I shall not live to see it, but you will. God will raise up a certain young man, and he will begin to keep meetings near Hunter's Pond." This exactly came to pass soon after she died ; and the woman she spoke to was one of the first who embraced the Gospel. I believe this poor but truly pious woman had long been praying, that the Lord would have mercy upon her neighbours, and send the Gospel among them ; and He mercifully condescended to show her, on her death-bed, that her prayers should be answered. It was rather remarkable, that the first person that was awakened in that town had been a most profane and ungodly man, and a determined enemy to the Methodists. But when he was

brought to repentance, he opened his door, and I began a prayer-meeting at his house. He turned to God with his whole heart; and everyone saw the change: he discharged the debts he had contracted in the time of his rebellion against God, maintained his family comfortably, and joined the society. He began to think soon after this, "It costs me a penny a week at my class: this would be something towards sending one of my children to school. I will not be in the society; but I will attend the preaching, and will walk closely with God." Upon this, he left the society, and afterwards became quite melancholy; insomuch that he could not rest in his bed, but wandered about in the fields at nights. He strove to sing vain songs, in order to drive those gloomy thoughts from his mind, but he was not able; he grew worse and worse, till he had nearly lost the use of his reason. He then joined the society again, sought the Lord with his whole heart, and soon found Him a God gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and has since then been a steady follower of the Lord Jesus.

In the year 1758 a young woman lent my father two sermons, which had been preached at the Old Church in Leeds, by the Rev. Henry Crook, who was then curate of Hunslet chapel. These sermons were so exceedingly censured, and the minister so ridiculed, that he published them in self-defence. Here I may justly stand and admire the wisdom and goodness of God. It was in reading these very sermons, that my mind was enlightened respecting the way of salvation by faith in the Redeemer of mankind. The subject of one of these sermons was Isaiah xxix. 11: "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed," &c.

In this he proved the necessity of Divine illumination, and that without it the Scriptures are a sealed book, both to the learned and unlearned. The other was on Jeremiah vi. 16: "Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths," &c. In this sermon he proved from the Bible and the Common Prayer-book, as well as from the Articles of the Church, that salvation by faith is the good old way; and that besides it there is no other in which a lost sinner can find rest for his soul. Had he only attempted to prove his doctrine by the Scriptures, I should have thought he put his own sense upon them; but as he clearly showed that, in the daily service of the church, we prayed for these things, I plainly saw that I had been praying for what I did not believe, and was deeply humbled before the Lord under a sense of my past sin and folly.

In June this year, I went to a feast at Askwith, with no other design but to get an opportunity to hear the Methodists. It happened to be the yearly meeting of the Quakers that day; and I went and heard a woman speak for more than an hour, but could not understand her at all. This was the first time I ever was in a Dissenting meeting of any kind. I went the same evening to Otley, and heard Mr. James Oddie preach an excellent sermon from Acts xiii. 38: "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," &c. I was very much surprised to observe the serious and devout behaviour of the people, whom I had so much despised, and was highly delighted with the singing; but the discourse, delivered from the pulpit with such a heavenly solemnity, quite astonished me. I was permitted to stay the society-meeting, and was obliged to conclude

that if the people paid any regard to the excellent instructions given them, they must be patterns of piety and godliness. Here it was that the Lord fixed a resolution in my heart, to seek and to serve Him, which, through His infinite mercy and love, has continued to this day; and which, I doubt not, will abide with me for ever. I returned to my uncle's, at whose house I then resided, but did not acquaint any one of the family where I had been; but, in the course of our conversation, my uncle said, "I pray God these Methodists may never get the upper hand: if they do, we shall have dreadful work." One present replied, "Why, what do you think they will do?" "Do?" said he; "why, they will murder us all. Do they not damn all mankind but themselves? And if they will damn us, they will murder us too, you may be sure." So ignorant were many people in these days respecting the Methodists and their designs.

I returned home fully purposed to seek the salvation of God, little thinking that any who loved me would oppose me in pursuing my best interests. But herein I was greatly mistaken. My father and mother, and all my relations, being as great strangers to the Methodists, and as deeply prejudiced against them as I had been, were astonished beyond measure, and used every means in their power to divert my mind from the object I had in view. As I had never disobeyed my father at any time, he thought that he had nothing more to do but to use his authority, which he did with all speed, and expressly forbade me to hear the Methodists any more. But I was obliged to disobey; and how was he surprised to find his authority disregarded! It gave me inexpressible pain to displease my father; but the

salvation of my soul was at stake. My uncle was a single man, and in good circumstances. He had often promised what he would do for me : but he sent me word, that I should never be the better for anything he had, except I left this way ; and he made his resolution good some years afterwards, when he was called out of time into eternity.

I had but very few opportunities of hearing preaching ; nor had I anyone to converse with, or from whom I could obtain help, respecting the salvation of my soul. The few Methodists that were in the neighbourhood were so much afraid of my father, that they had not courage to say anything to me. My mind was not a little pained to see those that I so cordially loved in such distress on my account ; and more especially as I well knew that all the opposition and unkind treatment which I met with from them, proceeded from ignorance, and that their souls were in as great danger as I saw my own to be. But the words of our Lord sounded in my ears, " He who loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Therefore I clearly saw that I must at all events pursue the one thing needful, let who would be offended with me.

I spent all the time I possibly could in reading the best books I could meet with ; and, through the merciful providence of God, I met with several of those published by Mr. John Bunyan ; and also Mr. Joseph Alleine's " Alarm to the Unconverted " fell into my hands. These I found profitable. By reading them my mind was much more enlightened, and my conscience more awakened. I soon received such a deep sense of my guilty and depraved state of mind, that my business became a burden to me, and my father really thought that I should lose my

reason, and be quite ruined. All his hopes concerning me were now blasted, and his designs frustrated; and, considering the violence of his natural temper, it is matter of astonishment to me, that he did not use me much worse than he did. For he had been at much expense in fitting me for the business for which he designed me; and, from the time I was awakened, I never used a mathematical instrument more, but laid aside all my books of architecture, and every endeavour to improve myself in gaining a more perfect knowledge of my business. I spent all the time I possibly could in reading divinity, in order to gain a more perfect acquaintance with the things of God. Indeed, I acted in all things as if I had the fullest assurance that the Lord designed me for the ministry; though, at the same time, I had not the most distant thought of any such thing. I now adore the wisdom of God in thus disposing my mind to search after Divine knowledge, and in leading me to devote myself wholly to Him; but do not recommend my example as to my business to all, as the Lord cannot have the same designs concerning everyone.

This was a time of great and sore trial. I saw with unspeakable sorrow how exceedingly distressed my dear parents were on my account; and yet, notwithstanding my sincere and tender affection for them, my conscience obliged me daily to increase their sorrow, not only in acting in direct opposition to their will as to myself, but in labouring with all my might to bring all the family into the same way. And, blessed be the name of the Lord, my labour was not in vain. My only brother was awakened, so likewise was my youngest sister's husband, and my eldest sister and her husband. These things, any

one may suppose, greatly alarmed my father, as he thought he saw all his family quite ruined ; and he laid all the blame upon me, and looked upon me as the cause of all these misfortunes ; so that he was almost willing to give me up, if he could only preserve the rest of his family : but the Lord had merciful designs concerning them.

My father had often threatened to disown and disinherit me, and had treated me with great severity ; but he now tried a different method. He expressed the tenderest regard for me, and said, " You know these people are exceedingly despised. It will entirely ruin your character to go among them ; and, as it is now a time of war, you may be pressed for a soldier, and then I shall be at a good deal of trouble and expense to get you released. You may purchase what books you please ; and surely you may gain much more knowledge by reading, than by hearing those unlearned and ignorant lay-preachers." I found it hard work to resist the authority, and withstand the tender entreaties, of an aged and affectionate parent ; but, although my heart was ready to bleed, I saw the necessity I was under to obey God, rather than man, even my own father. From this time he watched me so narrowly, that it was with great difficulty I could get to the preaching. One Sunday, in particular, I had fully intended to go, but his eye was upon me, and I had not resolution sufficient to break through. When the time was elapsed, I went into a solitary place, where I thought no one would find me, and there bitterly lamented my case before the Lord. My father soon found me, and asked me to take a walk with him into the fields, it being summer, in order to amuse and divert me ; but, alas ! my sorrow was too great to be

removed or relieved by anything of this sort, but was rather increased than otherwise. We returned in time to attend the service of the church ; and in the evening I read, as we generally did on a Sunday night, in the family. As I was very much profited by Alleine's "Alarm" myself, I read in that book this evening. He seemed to approve of what this blessed man of God said ; but I plainly perceived he did not understand him. I therefore, with all possible tenderness, ventured to speak a little on the necessity of experiencing these things in our own minds. This could not be endured : he was offended, and said, "Blessed be God, you are not to be my judge. If you were, I know you would condemn me ; and, for your part, I see you are utterly ruined. I have done all in my power to reclaim you, but it is all in vain. I rejoiced at your birth, and I once thought you as hopeful a young man as any in this town ; but now I shall have no more comfort in you while I live. Your mother and I are both growing old, and you will bring down our grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. These Methodists are the most bewitching people upon earth : when once a person hears them, there is no possibility of persuading him to leave them again. You think to make my house a preaching-house when once my head is laid ; but I will take care that it shall never be yours. I will leave it to the poor of the parish, before the Methodists shall have anything to do with it. Do pray give up this way, and let me die in peace ; and then you may do as you please when I am no more." Such a speech as this, from an affectionate parent, anyone may suppose, was exceedingly affecting. But, although my heart was ready to break, I could only reply, "When I can see sufficient reason to oblige

you in this particular, I certainly will, but not till then." He said, "I see it is all in vain; I must give you up. I am bound to pray for you as long as I live; but I see no ground of hope concerning you." I went to bed with a very sorrowful heart, but fully determined, let what would be the consequence, to seek the salvation of God.

My brother and I now began to take sweet counsel together, and greatly strengthened each other's hands in the Lord. We laboured to oblige our parents in every respect, to the very uttermost of our power, except in this one thing, which concerned the salvation of our souls; but, in my absence, my father so powerfully wrought upon my brother by his tender and affectionate entreaties, that he promised him he would hear the Methodists no more. This troubled my mind exceedingly; but I loved him too well to give him up. I persuaded him to go along with me to preaching once more; and the word took deep hold on his heart, and from that time he never looked back, but was faithful unto death. We frequently prayed together in our bed-chamber, and my mother got upon the stairs to hear us, and desired to join in prayer with us: soon after this my father desired to do the same; but as I had not then found a sense of the love of God, I had not sufficient courage to pray when he was present. His mind had been variously exercised: sometimes he thought he would use violence, and, at all events, prevent my hearing these men any more: then he thought, "But what, if he should be in the right? then how dreadful would it be!" I had bought the Rev. John Wesley's Sermons, and he read some of them. This gave him a more favourable opinion of the doctrines of the Methodists, and softened his

mind in some degree: but the minister of the parish, being a notorious drunkard, and a determined enemy to the Methodists, beginning to fear he should lose all our family, gathered up all the idle stories he could hear of respecting these despised people; and there were great plenty of such in those days. These he brought to my father, and thereby created me a great deal of trouble; but, by the mercy of God, I was generally enabled to search out the truth, and confute him, so that his bad designs were brought to nothing. And this wrought together for good in the end.

Still, however, my father was so exceedingly troubled respecting me, that we had no peace in our family, and I thought we should be obliged to part after all. As I could not fully open my mind to him, on account of the warmth of his natural temper, I was determined to write to him. I endeavoured to describe the state of my own mind, and showed him the extreme danger I apprehended myself to be in. Reasoning the case with him to this purpose: "What worse am I, in any respect, for hearing the Methodists? Am I disobedient to you, or my mother, in anything save this one? Do I neglect any part of my business? Must not everyone give an account of himself to God? Doth the law condemn any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth? Why, then, do you condemn the Methodists, whom you have never heard, and know very little of? If you will only hear them three times, and prove from the Scriptures that their doctrine is false, I will hear them no more; but, if you will not, my conscience obliges me to hear them, till it shall please God to convince me of my mistake by some other means." He seriously considered the contents

of my letter; and, being exceedingly desirous to reclaim me, he consented to go. The first he heard was that truly simple and upright man of God, Mr. Matthew Watson, of Leeds. He was not a little surprised to hear him pray and preach so remarkably well extempore; and was pleased, rather than much profited. The next was Mr. Benjamin Beanland, who was an excellent preacher; but he happened to say something which my father thought reflected upon the clergy: this he could not bear, and accordingly was so highly offended, that he would not so much as take his hat off during the whole service. The third he heard was Mr. John Pool, whom he liked very well, and was willing to hear a fourth, who happened to be Mr. John Hosmer, whom he greatly approved of; but still he was not convinced, though he could not disprove their doctrine. However, he began to pray that the Lord would be pleased to show him the good and the right way. And one Sunday morning while he was earnestly crying to God in the stable, where he thought no one could hear him, Divine light was communicated to his mind: his conscience was deeply awakened, and he was brought into the bitterest distress; insomuch that he trembled exceedingly, and even roared for the very disquietness of his soul, being ashamed and confounded, so that he could hardly hope for mercy. On this memorable day, my soul was, in a sense, brought out of prison, as I had from this time full liberty to attend upon all Divine ordinances without interruption. Very soon after, also, both myself and all the family, eight in number, joined the society. And in the year 1759 my father even invited the preachers to his house, where they have been freely entertained ever since. In so doing, he prevented

me from making his house a preaching-house, as he had before said ; for he made it one himself.

It is well known that particular persons may be very differently affected, when under the awakening influences of the Spirit of God. At this time, although I was deeply sensible of my lost estate, and filled with the most intense desire after salvation, yet I laboured under the intolerable burden of a hard and insensible heart. I should have been glad to have wept my very life away ; but, alas ! I only mourned because I could not mourn as I wished. My soul seemed shut out from the presence of God ; I had no access to His throne, no comfortable freedom in prayer, but was as if surrounded with clouds and darkness, and burdened with spiritual death. I was now tempted to think, that if I had been openly wicked, I might have been brought much sooner to the saving knowledge of God ; as then, I supposed, I should have experienced deeper repentance, and, through feeling a heavier load of guilt upon my conscience, should have prayed the more earnestly for pardoning mercy. Hence I was ready to question, whether it would not be the best way to turn back for a while, and drink in iniquity like water, that I might return and repent more effectually ! This, however, I could not do, because sin was exceeding bitter to me, and I abhorred it as the accursed thing that was the cause of all my trouble : besides, I saw that if I should sin wilfully, Divine grace might justly be withheld from me, and I might die in sin, and perish for ever. Very seasonably, Bunyan's book, termed "Heart's Ease in Heart Trouble," fell into my hands, where I met with this very temptation stated and answered. I heartily praised the Lord for this word in season. The snare

of the devil was broken, and I saw the state of my soul more clearly than ever.

At this time the Lord greatly revived His work among us. As we now had regular preaching in my father's house, many of our neighbours came to hear, and several were awakened, and joined the society. This was matter of great thankfulness to me; but still I was not brought into the liberty of the children of God. I therefore cried earnestly to Him, that He would graciously deliver me from that spiritual insensibility which I laboured under; and He condescended to grant my request. I went to a village called Barwick, to hear that heart-searching preacher, Mr. Hosmer; and the mighty power of God was present. All on a sudden my heart was broken in pieces, my spirit was deeply wounded, my head was as waters, and my eyes fountains of tears; and, before I was aware, I was crying aloud with an exceeding bitter cry. The trouble and anguish of spirit I then felt far exceeds all description. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in my flesh, and the poison of them drank up my spirits; and yet I could heartily praise the Lord, while in the deepest distress, because He had answered my long-continued prayer. I now sought the Lord with my whole heart, and constantly attended all the ordinances of God, both by night and day. I frequently walked eight or ten miles to hear the word preached, and constantly walked six miles to meet my class. I have gone over Blackmoor, so called, many a dark night, quite alone, and when it has been knee-deep in snow. Such were the desires which the Lord gave me, that nothing appeared difficult, nothing hard, that I had to pass through. So deep a sense had I, so keen a conviction, of my deplorable con-

dition, as a fallen, guilty, depraved sinner, that I had no rest in my bones by reason of my sin. Like Ephraim of old, "I bemoaned myself," and, like David, "roared for the disquietness of my soul." Anyone might have read the distress of my mind in my countenance. The things of this world were made bitter to me, and my lawful business became a burden. The love of this world, and all desire of making a figure in life, or of conforming to the customs or fashions of mankind, got their death's wound in my mind at that time, and have never recovered strength to this day, and I am persuaded never will.

One morning, as I was walking in the fields, in the deepest sorrow, being ready to conclude that there was no help, no mercy, for me, as, notwithstanding all my best and most powerful efforts, I was a poor prisoner still; the Lord was pleased to comfort my drooping heart, by darting these encouraging words into my mind: "Wait thou the Lord's pleasure, be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart." Hereby I was refreshed for the present, and was afterwards enabled to hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God. About this time a neighbour of ours was said to be brought to enjoy a sense of the love of God, under the third Gospel sermon which he had heard. This I, at first, thought impossible, till I heard Mr. James Oddie give public thanks on his account the next morning. I did not consider that "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years," and that He can do a great work in a little time. This poor man had lived many years without God in the world, but seeing me and my brother go so constantly past his house to the preaching, he was cut to the heart, and thought, "What unwearied pains

do these young lads take to get to heaven, and I take none at all!" From this he began to inquire what he must do to be saved; and, like many others, took refuge among the Methodists. After this he walked with God many years, and died in great peace, while we were commending his soul to God in solemn prayer. The consideration of his sudden conversion deeply affected my mind. I returned home, and retired to my bed-chamber; but here I had not room sufficient to vent my extreme distress. I therefore went into the barn, where I thought no one could either see or hear me. Here I wept, and prayed, and roared aloud, my distress being greater than I was well able to bear; yet I was not without hope, but had an earnest expectation that, unworthy as I was, the Lord would be gracious unto me. But I was not so private as I supposed: I found that my brother was in another part of the barn, in as deep distress as myself: and my father and mother soon heard our cries, and came to see what was the matter. My sister and her husband came also; so that we were now six in number, all in the same state of mind, and in the deepest distress. Had any of our neighbours either seen or heard us, they would certainly have thought that we were all beside ourselves. It was, indeed, an affecting sight; and the more so, as we had no one to assist us in any degree, either by prayer, or Christian counsel. But still we were none of us delivered: "the children were brought to the birth, but there was not strength to bring forth."

I sought the Lord as if there had not been a person upon earth who wanted salvation but myself. I could not, indeed, but heartily desire that all mankind might be saved; yet I could not rejoice when I

heard of different persons being brought into liberty, while I myself remained in bondage; as I plainly saw, if all the world were converted to God, and I were not, it would signify nothing to me. I went to the house of God, time after time, weary and heavy laden, yet in full expectation of meeting with my Saviour there; and many times my soul was, as I thought, just ready to lay hold on Him, but unbelieving fears prevented me. And yet I am satisfied that there was nothing, which I believed to be contrary to the will of God, that I had not given up. I was perfectly willing, and I had almost said infinitely desirous, to be saved upon God's own terms, and in His own way; and yet I could not believe. So that, after more than forty years' experience of the mercy and love of God, I am constrained to believe, that faith is the gift and the work of God, and that the soul must be under a peculiar influence of the Divine Spirit in the act of believing. The infinitely wise and blessed God is perfectly acquainted with the deceitfulness of the human heart, and well knoweth that, in the general, what we obtain at an easy rate, we too often set but little value upon. Therefore, that we may highly prize, and properly improve, His grace when we obtain it, He gives us deeply to feel the want of it, and, in a good measure, to know the worth of it, before He imparts it. Yea, and He gives us to taste the gall and wormwood, the bitterness of sin, and makes us heartily sick of it, before He delivers us from it. I adore His sacred name, that He took this method with me: He dug deep, and laid the foundation sure, and hath carried on the building to this day!

The time of my deliverance now drew near. I went to a neighbouring village to hear Mr. Hosmer.

It was a new place, and many came from various parts to hear the word of God. An extraordinary influence attended the word that night. There was a mighty shaking among the dry bones. Mr. Hosmer preached upon the words of Isaiah xli. 10: "Fear not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee," &c. These precious words were applied to my honoured father's mind by the Spirit of God, while Mr. Hosmer was reading them, and he was brought into marvellous light and liberty. Here I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of God, in the methods He takes to "hide pride from man," and "that he who glorieth may glory in the Lord." My dear father, who had long been so great a hindrance to me, was brought into the favour and family of God before me: the consideration of this constrained me to praise God, and yet it greatly increased my trouble. I kneeled before the Lord throughout the whole service, and for a considerable time after it was over, weeping, trembling, and crying to the Lord for mercy; but deliverance was not yet. Mr. Hosmer, in tender compassion to the souls whom he saw in such deep distress, appointed a meeting for extraordinary prayer the next morning, which was Sunday, March 16th, 1760. I went to that meeting deeply distressed, yet with a full expectation of finding the salvation of God. It appeared to me, that I had no hope beyond that meeting; that if I did not find the Lord there, I never should find Him: nothing but clouds and thick darkness appeared to me beyond that meeting. Before the service began, a person who tenderly pitied me said, "Fear not: the Lord graciously visited your father last night, and you will find the blessing this morning. You have been

an instrument in His hand in bringing all the family into the way, and He will not leave you behind." These words afforded me no comfort, as I knew very well I must not expect salvation because I had done something good, but wholly by grace, through faith in the blood of Christ. The service no sooner began than the Lord was wonderfully present. A person, who had been ten years by the way-side, was brought into liberty, and walked therein for many years, till he finished his earthly course with joy. I soon heard another, whose voice I well knew, cry for mercy; and his heaviness was soon turned into joy, and he has retained his confidence in God to this day. I was upon my knees in the middle of the room, and, if possible, in greater anguish of spirit than ever: surely "the sorrows of death compassed me about, and the pains of hell got hold upon me; I found trouble and heaviness. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." He heard me from His holy hill; He spoke, and I heard His voice. He graciously applied that blessed word to my mind, Isaiah xliii. 1, "Thou art Mine." In a moment I was perfectly delivered from all my guilty fears; my deep sorrow, my extreme distress, was entirely gone. The peace of God flowed into my conscience, and the love of God was shed abroad in my heart abundantly; my whole soul was filled with serious, sacred, heavenly joy; yea, I triumphed in the God of my salvation. The kingdom of heaven was opened in my mind in that happy hour, and the light of God's countenance shone with resplendent brightness upon me. I did not know that the words applied to my mind were in the Scriptures; but this did not at all damp my joy in the Lord, as I was well assured they were the voice of

God to me. But very soon afterwards my brother told me I might find them in the Bible ; and I rose early one morning, and, after prayer, opened my Bible upon that very passage. This was a kind of sealing of the promise to my soul.

The deliverance which the Lord wrought for me was so great, and the change in my mind was so extraordinary, that I never could doubt of my acceptance with God through Christ to this day. My convictions of sin had been so deep, painful, and of such long continuance, that, when deliverance came, it was not only the more welcome, but also the more clear. And as I had been favoured with so clear a manifestation of the love of God to my soul, no one need to wonder that, ever since I first acted in a public capacity in the church, I have been led to bear my testimony to the absolute necessity of every one's enjoying "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins ;" especially as the Scriptures are so remarkably clear and express upon the subject.

Having found salvation myself, I felt an intense desire that others should enjoy the same unspeakable blessing. I therefore began a meeting for prayer on Sunday evenings, and many of our neighbours attended. As we had no one who could give a word of exhortation, I sometimes read a sermon, and sometimes the Homilies of the Established Church. These had not been heard of for a long time, and therefore were quite new ; and the inhabitants, being one and all church people, were very willing to hear them. The minister of the parish, being, as I said before, a determined enemy to true religion, was highly offended, and laboured with all his might to prejudice the people against me. But he lost his bad labour, and was so provoked by the people turning

Methodists, that he left the town. I also read select passages from Burkitt on the New Testament; and afterwards I took God's own book, read part of a chapter, and endeavoured to explain it. The people bore with my weakness, constantly attended at all opportunities, and my feeble endeavours were crowned with some degree of success.

About six weeks after I found peace with God, Mr. Hosmer divided our little society into two classes, and made me the leader of one of them. This was a heavy cross, but I did not dare to refuse taking it up. The first time I met the class, I was brought into a much higher state of grace than before. From that time I enjoyed the abiding witness of the Spirit; my mind was constantly stayed upon God, and I enjoyed uninterrupted communion with Him. For many years after this, no evil temper, unholy desire, or carnal affection, had any place in my soul; but I was favoured with the continued presence of God.

On December 28th, 1760, my dear brother was brought into liberty. He had for many months been deeply and painfully exercised, and had earnestly sought the Lord with strong cries and many tears; but his soul was now brought out of prison. Eight of us had joined the society at the same time, and now my happiness was complete; for my eldest sister's husband also found the Lord soon after my brother, and we all rejoiced in God our Saviour together.

I was now exceedingly pressed to visit the neighbouring societies, and give them a word of exhortation. This I at first absolutely refused, as I thought myself utterly unqualified for anything of that kind; but in 1761 Mr. John Johnson, being stationed in the Leeds Circuit, and, from the first time he saw me,

being persuaded the Lord had called me to preach His Gospel, followed me with continual advice, persuasions, and even threatenings of the Divine displeasure if I would not obey the call of God. He even put me into the Plan among the local preachers before I had ever preached at all. This was a sore trial to me; and, to avoid it, I had thoughts of leaving my own neighbourhood, and going where I was not known. However, after much prayer, when the time appointed came, I went to Horsforth, the place appointed, and there attempted to preach upon John iii. 16: "God so loved the world," &c. I was also put down in the Plan to preach at Chapel-Town the same day; but was at a loss for a text. I retired, and while I was pleading with the Lord in prayer, His condescending mercy opened Jeremiah xxxi. 18, 19, to me in such a manner as I shall never forget. From this time I continued preaching occasionally till August, 1762, when the general Conference was held at Leeds. Mr. Johnson earnestly pressed me to attend it, which I did; and, without my knowledge, he recommended me as a candidate for travelling as a preacher. When Mr. Wesley asked me if I were willing to give up myself to the work, I trembled exceedingly; for I was far from being satisfied that this was the will of the Lord concerning me: however, as I seriously believed that they were a body of men that were under the Divine influence, I replied, "I am deeply sensible of my own weakness and insufficiency for so great a work; but if you and the brethren think good to make a trial of me, I give up myself to you." Accordingly I was sent into the York Circuit, with Peter Jaco, John and Nicholas Manners, Richard Henderson, and James Cotty.

It was a very grievous trial to my dear parents and Christian friends to part with me, as they feared that, when I was gone, the work of God among them would come to nothing. But the Lord took care of this : I was no sooner removed, but He raised up my brother, who filled up my place well for many years, even to the time of his death. I had met a few people at Harewood, who were left as sheep without a shepherd ; but how wonderful are the ways of God ! Many of the inhabitants, when they heard that I was gone out to preach the Gospel, said, if I would come and preach there, they would come and hear me : I did so, and they came accordingly ; and from that time there has been preaching in that town, and many precious souls have been savingly brought to God, and some have died happy in His love. I entered upon my Circuit with a single eye, having nothing in view but the honour of God, in the salvation of souls ; and such was the labour and the many and great hardships the preachers had then to endure, that I rejoiced in hope I should soon be worn out, finish my course, and be happy with my God for ever. The work of the Lord prospered much in several places of the Circuit, which was very large, taking us eight weeks to go once through it. The people treated me with the tenderest affection, and the Lord condescended to crown my feeble labours with a blessing. I did not labour in vain, or spend my strength for nought. Yet I had many trials ; for in several places we were greatly disturbed with mobs, especially at Beverley.

I was not, however, yet satisfied respecting my call to the ministry, as I was not always favoured with that freedom of mind and enlargement of heart in preaching which are so desirable. And, being

naturally of an exceedingly self-diffident spirit, and having sometimes to preach where there were local preachers who were, I supposed, much wiser and better qualified than myself, I seriously thought of giving up travelling at the close of the year. Mr. J. Mannors, who acted the part of a tender father to me, hearing of this, said, with great affection, "I suppose you doubt concerning your call to the ministry." I answered, "I do." He replied, "Why, you have no more cause to doubt of that than I have." This was a word in season to me. I was sure that he was a much better judge of such things than I was; and, as I well knew him to be a wise and holy man, his speaking in such strong terms concerning my call, helped me not a little.

Being encouraged by this faithful servant of God, I went to the Conference in company with that amiable man, Mr. Richard Henderson. This was the first time I ever was in London, and the Conference was held in Spitalfields chapel. We had no money matters to settle in these days; but after the preachers' characters were examined, and they were stationed for the next year, all the time was taken up in speaking upon spiritual subjects. This was the only time I ever saw that faithful servant of God, the Welsh apostle, Mr. Howel Harris.

At this Conference some of the preachers began to call in question the power Mr. Wesley exercised over them and the societies. But Mr. Harris pleaded his cause effectually, and among other things said, "If Mr. Wesley should, at any time, abuse his power, who will weep for him, if his own children will not?" These simple words had an astonishing effect upon the minds of the preachers; they were all in tears on every side, and gave up the matter entirely.

At this Conference in 1763 the Preachers' Fund was first begun. It was said that several of the preachers were growing old, and asked, what should they do for support, if they should live to be past their labour? And, as others of them had families, what would become of their widows and children, if their husbands and fathers should die, and leave them behind? Being young and inexperienced, I was utterly amazed at hearing this. For I thought that every Christian minister had an entire confidence in God, respecting temporal as well as spiritual things, so as to be perfectly free from all care as to what might befall either himself or family. However, although Mr. Wesley did not greatly approve of what was proposed, as he always thought it worldly, and not Christian prudence, to provide for a rainy day, yet he consented to it, and the Fund was begun.

I had now an opportunity to receive the holy sacrament among the children of God. And to see the large and deeply-serious congregations that attended the chapels, the uncommon number of communicants, their devout behaviour, and the order in which the whole service was conducted, was highly pleasing to me. O, how divinely pleasant, and how truly profitable, is it to wait upon God in His holy ordinances, when He is present in the power of His Spirit, and they are conducted according to His own appointment!

As our Conferences in these days only lasted from Tuesday morning till Friday noon, my stay in London was very short; it being thought very wrong for the preachers to stay in town at all after the Conference was concluded. I was appointed for the Howarth Circuit, with William Fugill, Paul Green-

wood, and Daniel Bumstead. Upon coming into the Circuit we found all the people mourning the loss of that eminently faithful servant of God, the Rev. William Grimshaw, who had died in April that year. Many, very many had, I am inclined to think, put that excellent man in God's place, and seriously thought that the prosperity of the work entirely depended upon him. Hence they thought, "Now he is gone, all is over with us; we shall surely come to nothing." God, we know, is a jealous God, and will not have us to ascribe that to any creature, which we ought to ascribe to Him alone: As the people, I am satisfied, did this, the Lord called His faithful servant away; and, it was very remarkable, the work prospered wonderfully; and I believe there was much more good done in that Circuit in that one year, than had been done in seven years before that time. In Keighley, also, and the neighbourhood, there was a glorious revival of the work of God, such as no one then living could remember to have seen. It seemed as if the word of God could carry all before it, and men, women, and children were converted on all sides.

When the year was expired, I attended the Conference in Bristol, in August, 1764. Having been very much united to Mr. Bumstead the preceding year, and he being appointed for Norwich, he requested Mr. Wesley to let me go along with him, which was granted. This proved a distressing trial to me, as I looked upon myself as a very improper person for such a place. My mind was painfully exercised, but was much relieved by hearing the Rev. Mr. Madan upon 1 Cor. i. 30: "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus," &c. Twelve clergymen attended that Conference, whose principal business was to

convince us, that we ought not to preach in any parish where there was a Gospel minister. Some of them were much more moderate than others. One of them said, "If a layman be called of God to preach the Gospel, then he has as good a right to do it as any clergyman whatever." Mr. Madan could not agree to this, but said he should not dare to forbid such a person.

The Conference being over, I set forward with my dear friend Mr. Bumstead, and spent the Lord's day in London; where I preached for the first time in Snowsfields chapel, which was just then built; and from thence we proceeded to Colchester, among a very affectionate, but exceedingly poor people; and from thence went on to Norwich. Here we had very large congregations, with abundance of persecution, both in the city and country. To break the windows, disturb our meetings, and abuse our persons, was their constant practice, especially during the winter; so that we were frequently obliged to complain to the magistrates: but they granted us very little relief. None of them would go a step farther than they were obliged, for fear of being persecuted themselves. I spent part of this year in Colchester, and we began to preach at a small town called Nayland. Here the mob was exceedingly violent. One night they supplied themselves with large oxen-horns, and sounded them to such a degree, that when I spoke as loud as I possibly could, I could not hear the sound of my own voice, nor could I satisfy myself by any means whether I had any voice or not. I was obliged to give over; and having to return to Colchester that night, our friends thought it would not be safe for me to take horse at the door, but to walk through the town, and they would meet me at the

bridge with the horse. I did so, and the mob made a way, and I walked quietly through them to the end of the town; but as my horse was not come, I was obliged to wait a considerable time, when the mob closed me in on every side. But the hand of God was upon them, and not one of them was suffered to hurt me. I was astonished at the goodness of God. They neither cast dirt nor stones, nor attempted to throw me into the river, nor do anything of the kind, although they seemed quite prepared for any mischief their bad master might set them upon. I found an inexpressible tranquillity in my own mind all the time, having no sort of fear as to what they might do. The poor people who came along with me from Colchester did not escape so well. They abused them in the most shameful and cruel manner, and some of them did not recover for a considerable time. I was obliged to appear at the quarter-sessions the next day, where the Rev. Dr. Tanner was chairman. He did not appear to encourage persecution, but acted the part of an upright magistrate towards us; and finding that we had done nothing contrary to the laws of our country, he desired us to forgive what was past, and he would take care, for the time to come, that we should not be molested. I told him that we were far from seeking any sort of revenge: those people had certainly treated us in a very improper, not to say in a very cruel, manner; but since he was so kind as to promise us protection for the time to come, we should willingly forgive all that was past.

We had an extraordinary prospect at Yarmouth this year of much good being done. But one of our leaders, turning Calvinist, divided the society, and our pleasing prospect was entirely blasted. It is

truly astonishing to think of the confusion and discord this occasioned. The unhappy effects of that breach have been but too sensibly felt by the pious people in that town to this day. We also began preaching at Lowestoft that year. Here we had mobs and tumults constantly ; but the Lord gave us and the people strength according to our day ; a society was raised, and a work was then begun, which has been carried on to the present time.

I had abundant reason to praise the Lord for my fellow-labourer. We were of one heart and one soul. We cordially loved each other, and on all occasions acted in unity and harmony. The people in general saw this, and it had a very blessed effect upon them ; as it utterly destroyed all party spirit, and put an end, in a great measure, to evil speaking. It surely is a great happiness when the preachers, in any particular Circuit, really love one another ; for as this will naturally tend to increase their own happiness, it will also greatly help their usefulness among the people. I found Mr. Bumstead a truly upright man, much devoted to God, zealous for His glory, and diligent in His work. A more cordial or faithful friend I never met with, nor one who, I believe, was more unreservedly or more disinterestedly given up to God and His work. It was a great pity he ever left the public work : he certainly went out of the Divine order, and I am inclined to think suffered not a little in his mind on that account.

The year being expired, my dear friend and I set forward to the Conference, which was held in Manchester, in 1765. On our way we were detained at Newark-upon-Trent on the Lord's day. Being obliged to take up our abode at an inn, we were rather at a loss, as we knew of no religious people

in that town. We walked into the stable, and I asked the ostler if there were any Dissenters in that town. He said, he did not know, but there wanted something to reform the people, for they were very wicked. I replied, "You say you do not know whether there are any Dissenters: then you have not lived here long? Pray where do you come from?" He replied, "From Malton, in Yorkshire." I asked, "Pray do you know Mr. Wilson, of Malton?" "Yes," said the man; "and I know you, too. I have heard you preach there."

We walked into the churchyard in search of serious people. I thought I saw a person who looked more solid than ordinary, and walked towards him. The man looked rather earnestly upon me, and said, "Pray, sir, are you upon a journey?" I answered, "Yes." "So am I," said he; "but pray, sir, are you not a preacher?" I answered, "I am." "A Methodist preacher?" said he. I replied, "Yes." "Pray what is your name?" I answered, "My name is Pawson." "John Pawson," he replied: "I have heard you preach at Northallerton. I was looking about for some serious person, as I am quite a stranger in this place." How condescendingly kind is our gracious God! We were looking about for a religious person, the honest stranger was doing the same, and the Lord granted our joint desire, and brought us together. After the service of the church, we returned to our inn. I soon observed that the waiter was remarkably attentive to all we said; and as our conversation was wholly upon religion, I perceived that he took particular notice of it. In a while, he ventured to speak, and said, "Gentlemen, we have a very good church in this town, and a tolerably good minister

too, if you choose to go." I replied, "Yes, we have been at church this forenoon: we think it right to attend public worship at all opportunities. Have you any religious people in this town?" "Very few indeed, sir," said he; "and the few there are, they call them Methodists. I know of only one woman, and myself, and they call us Methodists, although I never saw one in my life that I know of; but I have been led to think, they are very good people, because they are so much hated and despised by the wicked." I replied, "I am inclined to think that you have formed a right judgment of them: I believe the Methodists in general fear the Lord, and endeavour to honour and obey Him." "I have heard much," added he, "of Messrs. Whitefield and Wesley; but I am surprised that they should preach out of the church. And, likewise, they preach without a book: I wonder how the people can understand them." I replied, "You know our Lord preached upon a mountain, and St. Paul in the house of one Justus, and in the school of one Tyrannus. And as to their preaching extemporary, I suppose the people may understand them the better, as they adapt their discourses to the capacities as well as the states of their hearers. I am a Methodist preacher, and so is my fellow-traveller. I preached in the street at Norwich only last Lord's day." "Are you, sir?" said the man. "I have lived seven years at this house, and I never remember to have seen a religious person call here before, except the Bishop of Durham: he appeared to be a serious man." It is impossible to describe the delight this honest young man appeared to take in our company. He told us his experience, and how he spent his time. It was evident that the Lord had graciously visited his soul, though he had never

heard a Gospel sermon in his life, and had only the Bible, the Common Prayer-Book, and Milton's Paradise Lost to read. He spent all the time he could possibly spare with us, willingly joined us in prayer, and would needs treat us with a bottle of wine, but this we refused. We thought it not a little remarkable, that, strangers as we were in the place, the Lord should, in so particular a manner, direct us to, it seems, the only religious persons in the town.

In our way to Manchester, we called at Thorner, and I had the happiness to find all my father's family in good health, and happy in the enjoyment of God. I attended the Conference, where all the affairs of our Connexion were settled in great peace and harmony; and I was appointed for the Birstal Circuit, along with Mr. John Murlin, a holy, upright, good-natured man, and Mr. Parson Greenwood, an Israelite indeed. This was a happy and a prosperous year, and we extended our borders considerably. Mr. Wesley had withdrawn the preaching from Huddersfield for several years, at the request of the Rev. Mr. Venn, who thought himself sufficient for that parish; but we now began preaching there again, and by this means a way was opened into the mountains above, where the people in general were little better than heathens, ignorant and wicked to a high degree. The Lord hath since then wrought a wonderful change among them. Several chapels have been built in that part, and many souls savingly converted to God. When I was preaching at Thong, the minister of Honley sent the constable to take me up: he happened to come in just as I was taking my text. The man was so surprised to find that I took a text out of the Bible, that he resolved he would stay and hear me out: he did so, and was convinced

of the truth, turned to the Lord, found salvation, lived a few years happy in the love of God, and died in peace. So far was Satan disappointed of his hope in sending the poor man to the preaching!

In the year 1766 the Conference was held in Leeds, when I was appointed to the Manchester Circuit, along with Mr. Jaco, Mr. Paul Greenwood, and Mr. John Allen. We were as the heart of one man. I am inclined to think, that there never were four men more closely united than we were. Our Circuit was very extensive, as it took in Stockport, Macclesfield, Congleton, Newcastle, Warrington, Liverpool, Bolton, and many other towns. This was a very happy and a prosperous year; but in March the Lord was pleased to call home His faithful servant, Paul Greenwood, who died of a fever at Warrington. This was a distressing trial to me. He was a truly apostolical man, and exceedingly beloved by the people. He was one of the most sincere and upright men I ever was acquainted with, had travelled about twenty years, and had been a blessing wherever he laboured. I never saw a man more universally lamented by the people than he was. I preached his funeral sermon in deep sorrow, yet with uncommon liberty, from 1 Cor. xv. 57: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory," &c. Many souls were added to the church of God in the course of this year. The next Conference was held in London, which I attended; and was ordered to return to Manchester along with Mr. John, afterwards Dr., Whitehead, Mr. John Pool, and Mr. William Fugill. I had the care of this very large Circuit upon me, being appointed the superintendent, or, as the term then was, assistant preacher; so called, from assisting Mr. Wesley in watching over the societies, and keep-

ing up a proper discipline among them. I endeavoured to give up myself unreservedly to the Lord, and my strength was proportioned to my day. I was not so happy with my fellow-labourers as the last year, except with Mr. Whitehead: he was then an excellent preacher, and highly esteemed by the people; and that friendship between us was begun this year, which continued to his death, and I am persuaded will be renewed in eternity.

At the conclusion of this year, I found we had added four hundred and thirty souls to the society, and there was good reason to believe that above two hundred had found a clear sense of the love of God. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for His abundant goodness! This was the first Circuit that I ever was stationed in for two years. By this means I had gained a more perfect acquaintance with the people, and was abundantly more closely united to them; but, alas, while in this world, every pleasure has something of pain attending it. My strong affection for them made it the harder to part from them, so that I suffered not a little when Providence called me away. But "we are only strangers and sojourners upon earth, as all our fathers were."

In 1768 our Conference was held in Bristol, where all was peace, harmony, and love. I was appointed for the Wednesbury Circuit, along with my faithful friend, Mr. John Allen, and Mr. Isaac Waldron. The work of the Lord greatly prospered in our hands; we planted the Gospel in fourteen new places, and we were obliged to call out that excellent young man, Mr. Samuel Wells. A more upright creature I never knew. He walked with God, diligently laboured in His vineyard a few years, and then died full of faith and the love of God. In the

strength of his years, he was called to his reward: surely the judgments of our God are a great deep! For some time after I came into this Circuit, I was in some degree of heaviness. My soul mourned the loss of my Christian friends. I had not fully learned to enjoy the society of those I loved, while the Lord permitted them to remain with me, or me with them, and, when He called, then cheerfully to give them up, and go where He appointed; rejoicing in hope of meeting them again, where pain and parting are no more for ever.

In the course of this year I had such a deep sense of my own weakness and unprofitableness as led me to think that the Lord would lay me entirely aside. But I afterwards learned that, even while my mind was under this cloud, the Lord crowned my feeble labours with success, and made the word a blessing to many. When this painful trial was over, I laboured with great satisfaction, and the Lord added to His church this year three hundred souls. Here it was that I first became acquainted with one of the most amiable families I had ever known,—Mr. Eden's, in Gloucestershire. It was a heaven upon earth to be there. They were so unreservedly devoted to God, so simple of heart, so lively and zealous in the service of a good Master, that, as I could not but rejoice when I had the prospect of spending a day with them, so I never parted from them but with a degree of reluctance.

In 1769 our Conference was held in Leeds. It was at this time that we first sent preachers to America. Several of the brethren offered to go, if I would go along with them; but I did not see that the Lord called me to leave my native country, or to lay so heavy a cross upon my affectionate, and now

aged, parents; and therefore I was appointed for London. This was exceedingly painful to me; as I judged myself wholly unqualified for so high a station; but Mr. Wesley would have it so, and I submitted, only requesting that my beloved friend, Mr. Allen, might go along with me, which was readily granted. Here I found I was to preach to a wise and deeply-experienced people. The consideration of this led me earnestly to pray, that the Lord would grant me that wisdom and grace which I clearly saw I should stand in need of, in order that I might be made useful to them: I found my mind powerfully drawn to give up myself wholly to God; and from the fullest conviction, that the religion of Jesus Christ is the happiest and best thing in the world, I resolved, in the strength of the Lord, to follow Him fully, and to spend and be spent in His work.

I entered upon my labours with a lively expectation that the Lord would give me strength according to my day; and I had infinite cause to praise His sacred name, that He favoured me with freedom of mind, in declaring His truth to the people; and I had the satisfaction to know that my labours were generally acceptable, and attended with a blessing. Here I got acquainted with several intelligent and experienced Christians, who had been members of the society from the beginning. Their conversation was very profitable to me; and I was not only quickened to greater diligence, but greatly encouraged to "press towards the mark for the prize of my high calling."

In the month of October I received the affecting news that my honoured father was dangerously ill. I therefore went down to my native place, and

found him exceedingly weak, and not likely to live long. He bore his affliction with steady patience, and entire resignation to the will of God. He was exceedingly thankful that he had lived to see all his family savingly converted, made happy in God, and living in love and unity one with another. With tears of gratitude on this account, he said, "I think I may die with such a degree of peace as few have done before." Some time before he died he had a discovery, which affected him exceedingly. He saw (in such a manner as words cannot fully express) into what a holy and happy state the Lord brought him when he was first justified; what great privileges and unspeakable blessings he then enjoyed. But he painfully saw that he had not stood fast in that state of liberty into which he was brought; but, by giving way to his natural temper, which was exceedingly warm, he had lost ground, had grieved the Holy Spirit, and dishonoured his God. He saw that, although he had been remarkably diligent in attending all Divine ordinances, (and I believe very few ever excelled him in this,) yet he had often been a formal worshipper, and had too much substituted the means in the place of the end; so that he had made little or no progress in the life and power of religion. This discovery occasioned the deepest sorrow, and led him to the closest self-examination. He freely opened his distressed mind to me. I said, "The Lord hath made this discovery to humble, but not to discourage, you. He certainly designs that you should return to Him with your whole heart, that He may heal every wound, restore to you the joy of His salvation, and establish you with His free Spirit." He was greatly encouraged, but never satisfied till the Lord gave him a clear sense of His

love. From this time he was as a little child ; his whole soul was renewed in the image of God ; and although Satan sorely tempted him on account of his past unfaithfulness, yet he held fast his confidence in God to the last.

He attended the preaching till a few days before his death: he would be led down to the chapel, as long as he was able to walk, between two of us. In this he was an example to all who knew him. He said to me one day, "Do you think we shall know each other in heaven?" I answered, "Yes, certainly: heaven will perfect, not impair, our knowledge." He replied, with inexpressible joy, "O, how shall I rejoice to see any of you follow me to that happy place!" I was with him the whole day on which he died. He said very little, but seemed to be wholly engaged with God in prayer; and my mind was so deeply affected, that I could say very little to him. Towards the evening, I asked him how he found the state of his mind. He replied, with all the strength he had, "I feel no doubt or fear; I find I can pray always." I said, "Then you find your mind stayed upon God?" He answered, "O yes, firmly." I said, "It will not be long before you shall be with Him." He answered, "I do not care how soon." A little after this, a few Christian friends came in, and we joined in prayer with him, and solemnly commended his departing spirit to the God of love. As he was now exceedingly deaf, I asked him, if he heard us. He replied, "O yes, and I felt too: I am quite happy." After this he only said, "I long to part;" and then quietly fell asleep in my arms, without a sigh or groan, or any struggle at all, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, having lived in the married state forty-seven years.

Thus died my most affectionate father ; and by his death, I trust, I learned, more fully than before, how indispensably necessary it is to maintain our ground against our own natural temper. If we do not, we surely plant our dying pillow beforehand with thorns, and prepare a bitter portion for our souls on our death-bed, when otherwise we might drink deep of the cup of Divine consolation. How many of the children of God suffer the roots of bitterness, their own bad tempers, which had been effectually conquered, to spring up again, and hereby are kept in a very low state of grace, while they exceedingly grieve that Holy Spirit who would otherwise save them to the uttermost !

When we had committed the mortal part of my father to the grave, and I had settled the temporal affairs of our family, I returned to London, just in time to join with the great congregation in solemnly renewing their covenant with God. This was the first opportunity of the kind that I had ever had. The Lord was graciously present, and it was a time of refreshing to many.

While I was down in Yorkshire, I had frequent opportunities of preaching at Harewood ; and the word of the Lord was attended with a peculiar degree of Divine power, so that many were deeply awakened. But Satan prevailed upon the great man of the place, to give notice to all his tenants, either to quit their farms, or give up Methodism : this frightened many of them. An honest Quaker went to the gentleman, and said, " I always thought thou hadst been a reasonable man." He replied, " Why, Joseph, have you any reason to think the contrary now ? " He said, " Yes ; thou wilt not give thy tenants the same liberty that the king gives his sub-

jects : he gives us liberty of conscience, but thou wilt not give thy tenants that liberty. I would advise thee to let them alone. Thou knowest they are honest, industrious men ; and they pay thee thy rent very well. Thou hast no business with their consciences ; their consciences are God's : let them go to heaven their own way." He did so, and never troubled them any more to the day of his death.

The remaining part of this year I spent in great comfort and peace with my fellow-labourers. And although we had no very particular revival of the work of God, yet we had a gradual increase, and abundant reason to praise the Lord for ten thousand mercies.

In 1770 our Conference was held in London ; when Mr. Wesley drew up those Minutes which afterwards gave such offence. Had they been more seriously considered in the Conference, I am persuaded they would not have been expressed in such an unguarded manner as that in which they appeared. However, the Lord brought great good out of this evil, if so it might be called ; for it gave occasion to the publication of those excellent "Checks" of Mr. Fletcher, which have afforded many so much edification.

I was appointed for London again, with those truly excellent men, Messrs. Murlin, Rankin, and Allen. Nothing very remarkable happened in the course of the year, save that the Rev. Mr. Shirley published his Circular Letter, condemning the above Minutes, and inviting all the Gospel ministers to attend our next Conference, and to enter their solemn protest against them. Mr. Charles Wesley, who had always a very warm side towards the clergy, was greatly alarmed, as were all our principal people. I endeavoured, in a meeting of the leaders, to explain

these Minutes to them ; by which explanation they were, in general, satisfied. Only they, as well as some others, thought they might have been so expressed as not to have given such offence.

Throughout this year we had great peace and harmony, both among the preachers and the people. And we had the happiness to see the good pleasure of the Lord prosper in our hands, so that, in the conclusion of the year, we had abundant cause to praise the Lord for His manifested goodness.

In 1771 the Conference was held in Bristol. We had reason to expect a warm contest with the Calvinists, on account of the above-mentioned Minutes. A few of them attended, with Mr. Shirley at their head ; but they were nothing near so formidable as we expected. They had very little to say in defence of their conduct ; and the further discussion of the subjects in debate was, in a great measure, left to that great and good man, Mr. Fletcher, whose extraordinary writings have given abundant satisfaction to most of his readers.

I was stationed this year at Bristol, with my highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Murlin. We entered upon our work with the greatest cheerfulness, the Lord having made us as one soul. I am inclined to think that it has but seldom happened, that two men were more closely united than we were, for many years, even to the day of his death. We were favoured, throughout the year, with much of the Divine Presence, and with the love and esteem of the people ; so that our labours were rendered truly delightful, and I hope also useful, through His blessing upon them.

In 1772 our Conference was held in Leeds ; so that I had once more a happy opportunity of seeing

my aged mother, and all my dear relations, and had the unspeakable satisfaction to find them all steadily walking in the way of life, and in unity and harmony one with another. I was appointed to return to Bristol along with my faithful friend, Mr. Allen. We were most cordially received by the people, and had the happiness of seeing the work of the Lord prosper in our hands, in different parts of the Circuit.

As I had long been satisfied that a change in my condition in life would be to my advantage, on July 23d, 1773, I was married to Grace Davis, a person of a reputable family in Bristol, who had been savingly converted to God some years before. I entered into this new state of life in the fear of the Lord, and with a single eye to His glory. We had a truly Christian wedding, none being present but pious people; we spent the day in serious conversation, singing, and prayer, and I preached in the evening upon Psalm xxxiv. 22: "The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants; and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate." Soon after this I was suddenly seized with an inflammation in my bowels, and was brought to the very gates of death. The pain which attended this disorder was inconceivable; but I was mercifully relieved, by the blessing of God upon the use of proper means. Blessed be the Lord, my strength and my Redeemer!

Universal experience teaches, that every state and station in life hath its particular trials and crosses, and that solid peace and permanent happiness are only to be found in the enjoyment of God. I was now at the height of my wishes as to temporal things, the Lord having given me a pious, sensible, pleasing helpmate; but I still found the truth of that affecting word, "Man is born to trouble, as the

sparks fly upward." My wife became pregnant, and after a hard, tedious, and very painful labour, was delivered of two fine boys. The one died in the birth, the other lived only five weeks, and died also; and what exceedingly increased my affliction, my dear partner continued in an exceedingly weak and deeply-afflicted state, from June to October following, so that her life was in the greatest danger. But the Lord was entreated; He heard the united prayers of His people, and she was raised up again; though her constitution received a wound at that time, which it never recovered. It is impossible for me to describe the painful exercise, both of body and mind, which I then passed through; yet God supported, comforted, and, in due time, delivered me; and I thankfully acknowledge His abundant goodness in this, in the kindness of Christian friends, and in our possessing every temporal advantage that our state and circumstances required.

Our Conference was held in Bristol in 1774, and many of the preachers tenderly sympathized with me in my distress. After all our affairs were properly settled, I was appointed to labour in Leeds, and my faithful friend, Mr. Allen, was appointed to labour with me; but it was not till the 10th of October that my wife could be removed from Bristol, such was her extreme weakness. After a long and very expensive journey, we were, through the good hand of our God upon us, brought safely to Leeds, and my wife gradually recovered strength.

As, through the affliction of my wife, I had been a kind of prisoner for some months past, I felt more sensibly the happiness of being at liberty to labour in the Lord's vineyard. I bless God, I entered upon His work with the greatest cheerfulness, and

earnestly desired to spend and be spent for Him. My dear relations greatly rejoiced to see me once more, and my old friends and acquaintance received me with the utmost affection. We had no particular revival of the work of God in the Circuit, but we enjoyed peace in all our borders, and witnessed a gradual increase in the Societies, as well in number as in grace.

At the Conference in 1775, held in Leeds, I was appointed to continue there ; and that truly simple and upright man, Mr. Tennant, who was well received by the people in general, was my colleague.

There was a good work of God in Leeds and in some other places in the Circuit this year ; but it was attended with some degree of wildfire, chiefly occasioned by the imprudence of a well-meaning, weak man, who had far more zeal than knowledge. I laboured with all the prudence and tenderness I was master of, to preserve the good, and remove the evil : nevertheless I was accused to Mr. Wesley, as an opposer of the work ; but as I had an opportunity to state the case to him, he was fully satisfied. He certainly acted with great prudence in this business, so that the peace of the society was preserved, and we finished the year with comfort to ourselves, and to the satisfaction of the people in general.

In 1776, the Conference being in London, my wife accompanied me thither. We had an agreeable journey, and on the road she had the happiness to see a beloved sister at Ashburn, to whom she was very much united. At this Conference I was appointed for Birstal, along with Mr. John Morgan and Mr. Tennant. My wife was now so far recovered, that she could meet a class, and visit the sick and the poor, which she constantly did, and was

made useful to many. We had great peace in the societies, and the work of the Lord prospered in our hands, and we went on our way rejoicing.

At the Conference in 1777, held in Bristol, I was ordered to return to Birstal; and had with me, as fellow-labourers, Mr. Thomas Johnson, Mr. Joseph Thompson, and Mr. Tennant. This was the most glorious year I ever saw. There was an extraordinary revival of the work of God in Birstal and the neighbourhood. Very many poor, ungodly creatures were savingly converted to God, and made happy in the enjoyment of His love. The people were awakened in various ways, under the word preached, at the prayer and class meetings, and some in their own houses, who refused to come to the preaching. In the course of the year there was an earthquake, and thereby many were alarmed, and constrained to return to the Lord. My wife had full employment among the newly-awakened people. She was excellently qualified to deal with them, and was made very useful to many. The work increased upon our hands to the close of the year; and as we were succeeded by that prudent, zealous, and active servant of God, Mr. Thomas Taylor, who spared no pains to nurse these young disciples of Christ, they were preserved; and not only so, but the revival spread far and wide, so that great numbers were brought to God. In the course of this year, the Lord sent a very destructive fever among the inhabitants of Birstal, and many of these young converts died happy in the love of God.

In 1778 our Conference was held in Leeds, and I was appointed for London, with Mr. Rankin and Mr. Tennant. The night before we set forward on our journey, I had a very narrow escape indeed. A

very small bit of potato stuck in my throat, as I was eating my supper, and I was nearly suffocated thereby. So true it is, "in the midst of life we are in death," and therefore have need to be always ready.

I remained in London two years, having for my fellow-labourers, the latter year, my two good old friends, Messrs. Murlin and Rankin, with me. We had no particular revival of the work of God this year, yet we gained rather than lost ground.

It was during the latter year of my being in London, namely, in June, 1780, that those terrible riots happened. The time was certainly awful, and it was truly wonderful that no more mischief was done. They might have been suppressed in the beginning, with the greatest ease, but were strangely suffered to proceed in their bad work, with little or no interruption. The riots began on the Saturday night, were renewed on Sunday night, and continued till Thursday, when the Government interposed, and very soon restored peace to the city. I never could learn that the Protestant Association had any hand in this business; but it was believed by many that the Papists themselves were active therein. We were in no small danger, being greatly threatened by the Papists, on account of Mr. Wesley having published several letters against Popery at that time. A more awful and distressing sight I never saw, as we were surrounded with fire on every side; Clerkenwell prison, Newgate, the Fleet, the King's Bench prison, together with many other buildings, being all in flames at the same time. But it was truly astonishing, to see how exceeding still and quiet everything was, when once the soldiers began to act. They gained very great credit by their uncommon human-

ity, in treating the rioters (who set them at defiance) with such remarkable patience. Had they not done so, many more of those deluded people would have been killed.

In 1780 our Conference was in Bristol, and I was appointed to labour in that city, along with my faithful friends, Messrs. Rankin and Tennant. We were favoured with great peace and harmony among the people this year, but had no remarkable increase of the work of God. By constantly preaching at five o'clock in the morning, while in London and Bristol, my health was much impaired; I was brought very low, and it seemed as if I should not be able to hold out in the travelling line much longer. This gave me very little concern, as long life never appeared very desirable to me, being well convinced, that to depart, and to be with Christ, is far better; but, by the blessing of God upon the means prescribed by Dr. Hamilton, I was very much strengthened, so that I proceeded in my work. O, may I ever be unfeignedly thankful to the God of my life, for His unmerited mercy and goodness!

In 1781, our Conference being in Leeds, I had the happiness of seeing my dear relations once more, and rejoiced to find them all in the good old way. I was ordered to return to Bristol, along with my dear friend Mr. Murlin and William Moor. The preachers were much united, the people cordially received us, and the good work prospered in our hands.

At the Conference in 1782, held in London, I was appointed for York, along with Barnabas Thomas and Thomas Readshaw, both strangers to me. The weather, during this Conference, was such as had seldom been seen at that time of the year, being

exceeding cold and rainy. It seemed as if the whole harvest would be destroyed. The Lord, however, was entreated, and there was a speedy and a wonderful change in the weather; so that the corn was not near so much damaged as was expected.

Through the mercy and love of God, we came to York in great safety; but my dear wife was afterwards seized with a rheumatic fever, and brought very low. She was, however, mercifully restored; but from that time declined in her health very much, so that she was seldom well for any considerable space of time. My fellow-labourers were neither of them very acceptable to the people; which, being added to the afflictions of my wife, rendered the year very uncomfortable: yet the societies increased in some degree.

In 1783 our Conference was in Bristol, during which Mr. Wesley was dangerously ill, and we were obliged to do a considerable part of our business without him. It was very agreeable to see how deeply the minds of the preachers were affected, and with what unity and harmony everything was settled. Many fervent prayers were offered up to the Lord in Mr. Wesley's behalf: he was greatly supported under his affliction, and was meek, patient, resigned, and as a little child. The Lord was entreated; he was raised up once more to go in and out amongst us, and to regulate our affairs.

I was ordered to return to York, and had with me Mr. Edward Jackson and Mr. Charles Atmore, two faithful men, and very acceptable preachers. We came to York that very night when that extraordinary ball of fire was seen in the firmament all over the kingdom. I had a clear and distinct view of it for a considerable time. It appeared to me in

the form of a very large sugar-loaf of fire, exceedingly bright and luminous, so that I was all surrounded with light for some time. It seemed to pass slowly over my head; and when it was gone a considerable space beyond where I stood, it appeared to divide into many parts, and disappeared.

This was a year of great and sore affliction to me: for, although my fellow-labourers were very acceptable, were kind and affectionate both to me and my wife, and the work of the Lord prospered in our hands; yet soon after we arrived in York, my dear wife began to be so very much afflicted, that she was confined first to her room, and then to her bed, and on the 9th of December quietly breathed out her precious soul into the hands of her Redeemer.*

I spent the remaining part of this year in as agreeable a way as I could expect, but was often deeply affected in the lively remembrance of those † who were so justly dear to me, and whom the Lord had lately called away. My constant prayer, however, was, that I might be perfectly resigned to His will, and mercifully supported under my distressing trials; and, for ever blessed be His name, my strength was in proportion to my day.

At the conclusion of the year, we found that the Lord had crowned our labours with greater success than we expected, and added a greater number to the societies than we had been acquainted with. This was matter of praise and thanksgiving to us. We had a very solemn and deeply-affecting time when we took our leave of the people in York. Many

* The reader may see some account of her in the Magazine for February, 1793.

† Mr. Pawson also lost his mother this year, who died at Thorner, January 28th, 1784.

were melted into tears, and I think would not soon forget what they then felt of the power and presence of the Lord. I cannot say that I was sorry to leave York, (though I sincerely loved the people,) for the remembrance of the afflictions I had there met with made me willing to leave the place.

At the Conference held in Leeds in 1784 a greater number of preachers attended than had ever been known to attend a Conference before. This was occasioned by what was commonly called the Conference Deed, which was the unhappy cause of much discontent with some of the preachers and many of the people. For many years it had been very much doubted whether our chapels were properly secured to the Connexion. Various methods were proposed, but none fixed upon till the preceding year, when it was agreed, that this said Deed should be drawn up, and enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery. The sole design of this was fully to ascertain the meaning of the word "Conference," so that it might be recognised by the law of the land. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley selected an hundred of the preachers, whose names were inserted in this Deed; and these and their successors were meant to constitute the Conference for ever. That the names of some of the old preachers were left out, and those of others, much younger than they, inserted, exceedingly offended the former, and surely not without cause. I do not think, however, that Mr. Wesley had any improper design in this, but that he did it without due consideration, not foreseeing the consequences which would follow. Dr. Coke has been very unjustly blamed, as having selfish designs in procuring this Deed to be made, and influencing the mind of Mr. Wesley in the choice of the preachers;

but I am persuaded that, respecting both the one and the other, he was perfectly innocent.

I was appointed for Manchester, along with my invaluable friend Mr. Murlin, nearly worn out in the service of a good Master, and Mr. John Goodwin, whom I had recommended to the Conference about seventeen years before. Here I met with many of my old friends, and also with several who had been brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God under my ministry, when I was stationed here some years before. Two of these were leaders in the society. This, anyone may suppose, was matter of rejoicing to me; and I could heartily praise the Lord, who had, in any measure, made me useful in His hand to my fellow-creatures.

Many of the people in Manchester, and in different parts of the Circuit, were exceedingly lively, zealous, and active. And we had much of the power and presence of the Lord with us, so that His blessed work greatly prospered in our hands. Some of the people were in great danger of running into wildness; but, with all the prudence and tenderness we were masters of, we endeavoured to guard them against everything of the kind, and our labours were not in vain.

The preachers were very much united to each other: we acted by united counsels on all occasions, and cordially rejoiced in each other's success and happiness; so that the year passed away comfortably, only my late distressing trials had left a soreness upon my mind; but, after all, we closed this happy and prosperous year with great comfort, as we found that the Lord had added to our number four hundred souls. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

Our Conference was held in London in 1785. When I came thither, I found, to my great surprise, that Mr. Wesley had come to a determination to ordain ministers for Scotland; and that Messrs. Hanby, Joseph Taylor, and myself, were desired to go thither. I had fully expected to return to Manchester, and had not the most distant idea of anything of this kind taking place. I am well assured that this was a matter fully determined upon by Mr. Wesley himself, from the time that he ordained ministers for America; and although Dr. Coke might come into his views, believing that by these means the work of the Lord would prosper the more, yet I am satisfied that it was not through Dr. Coke's influence with Mr. Wesley that these steps were taken, but that the plan was wholly his own.

I had come to a determination to enter into the married state once more, being convinced that this would be the best for me in every respect: and, after serious consideration and much prayer, I had formed a connexion with Mrs. Wren, of York, one that I judged was every way suitable for me; and accordingly we were solemnly married by the Rev. Mr. Richardson, in York, August 12th, 1785. She had been in the Methodist society for some years, and was a most sincere, upright, and lively Christian; and I doubt not but I shall have everlasting cause to praise the Lord for her.

Having spent an agreeable week with our beloved friends at Thorner, we set forward on our journey to Edinburgh; and, through Divine goodness, arrived there in safety, and found a very small but affectionate society. We had an opportunity of receiving the Lord's supper the first Sunday we spent in this

city. There were several ministers present, and the whole service was conducted with great seriousness and solemnity, and in such a way as had a natural tendency to edify the people. We found it a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

I spent this year between Edinburgh and Glasgow, with Mr. Robert Johnson, a deeply pious young man. The Lord gave us favour in the sight of the people, and some degree of success in our labours: but there certainly is a very wide difference between the people in Scotland, and the inhabitants of England. The former have, from their earliest years, been accustomed to hear the leading truths of the Gospel, mixed with Calvinism, constantly preached, so that the truths are become quite familiar to them; but in general they know little or nothing of Christian experience; and general religion, or the life and power of godliness, is in a very low state in that country. I am fully satisfied that it requires a far higher degree of the Divine influence, generally speaking, to awaken a Scotchman out of the dead sleep of sin than an Englishman. So greatly are they bigoted to their own opinions, their mode of church-government, and way of worship, that it does not appear probable that our preachers will ever be of much use to that people; and, in my opinion, except those who are sent to Scotland exceed their own ministers in heart-searching, experimental preaching, closely applying the truth to the consciences of the hearers, they may as well never go thither. The deep concern I felt for the prosperity of the work of God led me to earnest prayer; so that my own soul was kept alive, and I got clearer views of the gracious designs of God, in the Gospel dispensation, than I had ever been favoured with before; so

that, I trust, I shall have everlasting cause to praise the Lord that I ever went to Scotland.

We had orders from Mr. Wesley to form our people into a church, and to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper among them. Many of the people had long desired this, others were very much opposed thereto, so that it was a painful piece of business. Had it been done many years before, there is reason to believe that it would have answered a good end; but now it appeared to me to be too late. We certainly were favoured with much of the Divine presence at our sacramental occasions, and the people were very much refreshed and strengthened; and I believe that, by sitting constantly under our ministry, their judgments were better informed, their understandings more enlightened, and their experience both clearer and deeper than before. But, notwithstanding this, our labours have not succeeded in Scotland, as in other parts of the nation: very far from it.

In my way to the Conference in Bristol, in the summer of 1786, I had the happiness of seeing our dear friends at York and at Thorner, and we once more praised the Lord together.

All our affairs were peaceably settled at this Conference; and it appeared from the accounts brought in, that not less than eight thousand souls were added to the societies the last year. I was ordered to return to Edinburgh with Mr. Charles Atmore, a lively, zealous young man, one every way agreeable to me. We were mercifully preserved on our long journey, and entered upon our work with great cheerfulness. We were favoured with much of the presence of the Lord, both at Glasgow and Edinburgh, but had no considerable number added to the

society. We were enabled to build a large commodious chapel at Glasgow in the course of the year; and when finished we had very large congregations, and there was a good prospect of a prosperous work. In July, 1787, we returned to England, in company with good Mr. Hanby and his family; and, through infinite mercy, were brought in safety among our dear friends at Thorner.

This year our Conference was at Manchester; and after all our affairs were settled, I was appointed for Leeds, along with Mr. John Shaw and Mr. George Snowden, two mild and peaceable men. We were favoured with peace in our societies, had large congregations, the work of the Lord was deepened in the minds of many, and not a few died in great peace, leaving a blessed testimony behind them.

Poor William Shent died this year, a melancholy instance of human instability. After preaching the Gospel to others for forty years, there is too much ground for fear that he died in sin at last. "O for grace to endure to the end!"

At our Conference in London, in 1788, we had great unity and harmony among us, and received good accounts of the work of the Lord from many places. All our affairs, also, were agreeably settled, except that of Dewsbury chapel, which gave great pain to many. I was appointed for Leeds. This was a year of trouble and great perplexity to me; but the Lord brought me through the fiery trial, and did not suffer the flame to kindle upon me: everlasting praise be rendered to His sacred name!

The Conference was held in Leeds in 1789, and I was appointed for Birstal, along with Mr. Joseph Entwisle and Mr. James Ridal, two holy, upright, good-natured men. Had it not been for the sad

effects of the separation in the society at Dewsbury, I believe we should have had a very comfortable year. We acted, however, in unity and harmony one with another; and the good pleasure of the Lord, in some measure, prospered in our hands, though not so much as we desired and expected.

At the next, held in Bristol, I was appointed to return to Birstal, along with Mr. William Percival, and Samuel Taylor, a young man who then first began to travel. This was the last Conference that Mr. Wesley attended: he was now nearly worn out, and his faculties evidently were very much impaired, especially his memory.

I returned to my Circuit, in company with Messrs. Thompson and Atmore. In our first day's journey my mare was taken exceedingly lame on all her feet. Hence I was greatly distressed, not knowing what to do; but as I well knew that it is the Lord who preserveth both man and beast, and that He hath all power, I cried unto Him in my trouble, and He graciously delivered me out of my distress. In a little time the lameness went off, and I was brought in safety to my own peaceful habitation. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

In March this year the Lord called home our spiritual Joshua. We had long expected this sore stroke, so that it was no surprise to us; yet, at the same time, we were filled with deep concern for the prosperity of that work which for so many years he had been the grand instrument, in the hand of God, of supporting.

Our Conference was held in Manchester in 1791. Mr. William Thompson was chosen our president; and, although we had many and great difficulties to encounter, yet, through the infinite mercy and good-

ness of God, we were brought through them all, and the preachers and the people continued united.

I was appointed for Halifax, along with Mr. Joseph Entwisle, who was highly agreeable to me; and, in May following, he was married to Mary Pawson, my brother's daughter, with the hearty consent of her friends. We had much of the Divine presence in our assemblies this year; the work of God was deepened in many minds, others were brought to the saving knowledge of God, and others were truly awakened, so that we had reason to praise the Lord for His manifested goodness.

In the year 1792 the Conference was held in London, and Mr. Mather was chosen president. It was with the utmost difficulty that the peace of the Connexion was preserved; but our disputes were settled, for the present, by a solemn appeal to the lot; and I was ordered to return to Halifax, with that holy, upright young man, Mr. Robert Lomas.

Near the conclusion of this year, a very remarkable revival of the work of God began at a lovefeast, which was held in Greetland chapel; the power of God came down upon the people in a very extraordinary manner, while Mr. Lomas was engaged in prayer; there was a general cry for mercy heard through the whole congregation, and many were brought into the liberty of the children of God. This blessed work spread into the neighbouring societies, and into various Circuits, and great numbers were made the happy partakers of redemption in the blood of Christ.

At our next Conference, held in Leeds, the preachers were pleased to make choice of me for their president. We had several very difficult affairs to settle; but the Lord our God was present with us,

and we were mercifully brought through them. The whole body of the preachers also appeared to be more closely united than they had been. At this Conference we had the most solemn and affecting meeting, when the preachers, twenty-three in number, were admitted into full connexion, I ever saw on that occasion. The Lord was most graciously present in the midst of us, and great was our glorying in the God of our salvation. The people sung the praises of the Lord more like angels than men, and surely it was a heaven upon earth to be there.

I was appointed for Liverpool; with Mr. Adam Clarke, a man of considerable learning, of extraordinary ministerial abilities, and one that I found much union with. Here we had large congregations, and a blessed prospect of much good being done. But, alas! the people were divided in judgment respecting the Church and the sacrament; so that it was with the greatest difficulty we could keep them united in one body. However, notwithstanding all the difficulties we had to encounter, we had a happy and a prosperous year. Many were greatly quickened, comforted, and established in grace, and not a few were added to the society; so that we had abundant cause to praise the Lord for His manifested power and goodness.

In 1794 our Conference was held in Bristol, and Mr. Thomas Hanby was chosen president. Our disputes were very high respecting the sacrament, the trustees of several chapels being much dissatisfied; so that an unhappy division took place in the society in Bristol the next year, on account of these disputes.

I was ordered to return to Liverpool, with my highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Clarke. As it was not

in our power to keep the people in general quiet without the sacrament, we were under the necessity of complying with their wishes. This was certainly attended with an abundant blessing, and great numbers constantly attended that sacred ordinance. Surely the Lord was present in the midst of us, and caused the light of His countenance to shine upon us in a very remarkable manner; but those who were strongly prejudiced in favour of the Church were highly offended, and a considerable number left the society. This occasioned us much uneasiness; but still the work of the Lord prospered in our hands, and we had a considerable addition to the society. Many of the people were remarkably lively, zealous, and active, and their labours were attended with a blessing, so that we had great cause of thankfulness.

This was a year of great strife and contention: circular letters of various kinds were sent throughout the Connexion, and we were in great danger of a general division taking place among us; but God, in great mercy, prevented it.

In 1795 our Conference was held in Manchester, and Mr. Joseph Bradford was chosen president, chiefly because he was judged by many to be of neither party. Our disputes ran very high; but we kept a day of solemn fasting and prayer before the Conference began, which was attended with much of the Divine presence; and, in order to give satisfaction to all parties, as far as possible, a Plan of Pacification was drawn up by nine of the preachers, chosen by ballot from the whole body, and we all sacredly engaged to act agreeably thereto on all occasions; and by this means we were kept united in one body still, and our enemies were disappointed of

their hope. Blessed be the name of the Lord for His abundant mercy !

I was appointed, though much against my will, for London, along with Messrs. Clarke, William West, Walter Griffith, Francis Wrigley, and Richard Reece. There had been much strife and contention there ever since the death of Mr. Wesley, which had greatly hindered the work of God. My good old friend Mr. Mather assisted me in making an agreement with the trustees, and in putting an end to all these unhappy disputes. Peace being restored, our congregations increased, and the work of the Lord, in some measure, prospered in our hands.

In 1796, when our Conference was held in London, Mr. Thomas Taylor was chosen president. We had much difficulty in settling our affairs at this time; but, through the unmerited mercy of God, we were preserved from dividing: only one of the preachers, who had by his publications occasioned great uneasiness, was excluded the Connexion. My friend Mather and I were requested to go down to Bristol, in order to use our best endeavours to unite the society there; but, after all we could say or do, we could not prevail upon them to think and let think; so a considerable division took place.

I was appointed to continue in London, with several of the brethren above-mentioned. The preachers were united, and the unity of the society increased; a good understanding took place between the trustees and the people in general, so that the work of the Lord began to revive.

At the Conference in Leeds, next year, Dr. Coke was chosen our president: we had likewise a Conference of trustees at the same time. Now a small division took place. The preacher who was excluded

the last year had laboured with his might to bring this about ; and had prevailed upon three more to unite with him, and these divided the societies in several places. We had many painful exercises to pass through this Conference ; but, upon the whole, we had great reason to praise the Lord that our affairs were settled so well, and that no greater division happened among us.

I was appointed for London a third year, and had for my fellow-labourers Messrs. Clarke, Atmore, Marsden, and J. Ashall. Being exceedingly wearied with the business of the Conference, I hastened back to London sooner than I intended ; and, by so doing, greatly disappointed my beloved brother, who earnestly desired me to return to Thorner, after the Conference was over. And had I known that this was the last time I should ever see him, I certainly should have complied with his request. But, alas ! little did I then think that this would be the case. In April following, I had the melancholy news of his sickness and death. I hastened to Thorner ; but they had committed his body to the ground the day before I got there, so that I had not the satisfaction so much as to see his remains. This was exceedingly distressing to me, as I loved him as my own soul.

Notwithstanding all that have been called away by death, there is a goodly number of our family still on earth, and in the way to the kingdom of God. And I greatly rejoice in this, that the preachers are still entertained by my two nephews, at the same houses where they have been cheerfully received from the beginning. My brother's only son, being now comfortably settled in the world, thankfully receives the ministers of Christ, and cheerfully entertains them, in the same house where his father and

grandfather did before him. Blessed be the Lord for this, and for all His manifold and great mercies ! And my sister Tarboton's son entertains them at the same house where his happy father did for many years. Glory to that God who gives both ability and a willing mind ! May they all continue faithful unto death !

Such was the present state of the London society, that it was judged necessary for me to be stationed there a fourth year. This I did not desire ; but, on the contrary, judged it highly expedient for me to be stationed in Leeds, or as near Thorner as might be, that I might assist my nephew in the settlement of his affairs, being only in his nineteenth year. I hope, however, that my appointment was of God, and that it was attended with a blessing to the establishment of peace in that society. In this good work I was assisted by our venerable friend Mr. Mather, who was appointed to labour with me, in London, this year. The people in general seemed to be well satisfied with my return to them, though some were of a different mind. My language was, " Here I am, at the disposal of my Lord and Master. Let Him make what use of me He shall see good. I am His redeemed creature ; and I desire to spend and be spent in His service, and to live wholly to Him, so that at the last I may live with Him for ever."

In the course of this year I printed an affectionate Address to the Junior Preachers. This was well received by the brethren in general, but not by all. A few young men were highly offended with it, and from these I met with unkind treatment ; yet I had the thanks of the Conference for it. If ever my eye was single in any one action of my life, it was so in

printing that Address. My grand design was to preserve the primitive spirit of Methodism in the preachers.

In the year 1799 I was appointed for Leeds, with Mr. W. Blagborne and D. B.

I was now near the close of my sixty-second year. I felt the infirmities of age coming upon me ; but I bless the Lord, I could cheerfully sing, —

“ My remnant of days
I spend in His praise,
Who died the whole world to redeem :
Be they many or few,
My days are His due,
And they all are devoted to Him.”

There was a strong inclination in the people to hear the word, and the preachers were well received. We had also great peace and harmony throughout the Circuit, but no considerable increase in the societies.

At the Conference held in London next year, I was appointed to return to Leeds with Mr. Barber and D. B., with whom I did not doubt but I should be very comfortable, considering them as good men, and acceptable preachers. The people were highly satisfied with the appointment, and we had great peace through the year. Our congregations were so large, especially at Leeds, that it was determined to build another chapel.

A little after this Conference, I wrote in my diary as follows :—“ How many of our old preachers has the Lord lately taken to Himself, and very few of them are left behind ! Messrs. Murlin, Roberts, Furze, and Mather are gone ; and there are now only two in the Connexion who have travelled longer than I have done, namely, T. Taylor and Isaac

Brown. I could not but take notice, at our late Conference, that there were only two brethren present who were at the Conference in 1762. Such a change do a few years produce! How deeply affecting are the words of the prophet: 'Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?' O no! The wisest, the best, and the most useful of men must die to be no more with the church on earth! But, O! how wonderful is the wisdom, and how astonishing the goodness, of God! When He calls one away, how strangely does He fill up his place in the church and in the world with another! so that the man, however great or good, however useful or holy, he may have been, is scarcely missed by the survivors, except it be by those in his own family, and a few particular friends. And even with these time effaces those tender impressions from the mind; so that, as our place knows us no more, so our best friends find they can be happy without us; and seldom, after a few months or years have elapsed, do they so much as speak or even think of us.

"I am now, through the infinite mercy of God, in good health, though in the sixty-third year of my age. I am comfortably settled with good, friendly, useful preachers, among an affectionate people, and in the enjoyment of every temporal blessing. O that I may be sincerely thankful to the Giver of all my mercies, diligent, zealous, and useful in the hand of the Lord; and may I stand in continual readiness to meet whatever change may take place in the course of this year, whether pain or ease, sickness or health, life or death. Amen."

At the Conference held in Leeds, 1801, I was appointed for Birstal. I looked upon it as a privi-

lege to go to so quiet a corner as I judged that Circuit to be.

Our Conference concluded in a very Christian-like manner, with serious, fervent, solemn prayer ; so that they who stayed till the conclusion of it were not only deeply affected, but parted one from another as Christian ministers ought to do on such occasions, not knowing that they should meet again in the present world.

I have now attended forty successive Conferences, which is more than any preacher now living can say, besides myself. How many more I may be permitted to attend, God knoweth. This I leave with Him, with whom are the issues of life and death. My times are in Thy hand, O Lord. Many of our preachers have been called away in the course of the last year ; and how many, or who, may finish their course this year, no one can tell but He in whose hand our life is. May He fully prepare those whom He intends to call, and may I stand in continual readiness to meet that most important event ! May it ever be the language of my heart, " Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen and Amen !

We had great peace this year, but no considerable increase in the societies. Many of the people seemed to enjoy a good degree of inward life, were very zealous and active, and prayed most fervently and constantly for the preachers, and the prosperity of the work of God. We were favoured with much of the Divine presence in our meetings ; and I do not remember ever to have found greater enlargement in prayer than this year. Blessed be the Lord for His abundant goodness and mercy.

I have now travelled forty years; and have not, in all that time, been confined by affliction of any kind forty days, but have been favoured with almost uninterrupted health and strength. Through the mercy of God, I endure to this day. I may stand astonished when I consider how I have been preserved from what are commonly called "misfortunes" all my life long; for though I have, many times, fallen from horses, and once was overturned in a coach, I never had a bone broken or dislocated. Praise the Lord!

By the mercy of God, I was brought to the conclusion of the year in peace. I earnestly wished to be excused from attending the Conference in July, on account of my age, and the great distance, it being held in Bristol this year. But the brethren would not excuse me. I set off, in company with Mr. J. Barber, a man that I greatly esteem. We spent a night with our friends in Sheffield, and I preached to them in the evening, with some degree of liberty. We spent the Sunday very comfortably in Birmingham. At Bristol I met with many old and dear friends, who appeared very glad to see me once more, and treated me with great kindness and affection indeed. It brought to my remembrance old times, when, being stationed among them, we took sweet counsel together, and were edified by the mutual faith of one another. A great number of preachers attended this Conference, many of whom I did not know. My mind was much affected in seeing the change which a few years had brought about, and how few old men were amongst us.

We had many useful sermons preached during the Conference, had in general large congregations, and

many fervent prayers were offered to God for the prosperity of His work, and the enlargement of His kingdom.

I returned again to Birstal, and met with a cordial reception. May it be for the honour of God, and our mutual happiness! Here I am, in this obscure corner, in my own little, quiet, peaceful habitation, where, I praise the Lord, I live in love and peace with everyone, and enjoy every temporal blessing I can desire. What can I wish for more, but an increase of the life of God in my own soul, and that His good pleasure may prosper in my hand? How little did I think, when I entered upon this work, that my life would be lengthened out for forty years! Yet such is the goodness of God, that, after these many years are expired and gone, here I am, a monument of His mercy, a witness of Divine love, and an heir of everlasting life! Perhaps, this will be the last year of my life, and the Lord may have sent me here to finish my course among my old friends, and near my native place, where I wish to rest with my fathers. If so, Thy will be done. O Lord, make me fully ready, and take me home when Thou wilt. Amen.

“At the Conference held in Manchester in 1803, it was matter of great thankfulness to me, to find that there had been an increase of numbers in our Connexion the preceding year; and I trust, also, an increase of solid piety. It appeared to me, that the preachers, and people in general, were in as good a state as I had ever known them to be in. At this Conference I was appointed for the Bristol Circuit. I think I never at any time more fully committed myself into the hands of the Lord, in order that He might dispose of me as He pleased, than I did at this

time. I am sure it was the prayer of my soul, 'Lord, send me where Thou wilt: only let Thy presence go with me, and I am content.' My dear partner and I paid a visit to our relations at Thorner, for a few days; and I opened the new chapel, which they had just built. We had a large congregation, and a lovefeast afterwards. The Lord was present, His people were edified, and several declared, with freedom, what their gracious God had done for their souls.

"I found the congregations in Bristol much larger than I expected. Many of the people appeared to be deeply pious, and to live in expectation of seeing a revival of the work of God, for which they prayed earnestly, knowing that the help that is done upon earth, the Lord doeth it Himself."

November 30th.—This year, in a letter to Mr. Benson, speaking of some unprofitable speculations which some people were agitating in meetings, held for that purpose, he says, "I sincerely wish I may, to my latest breath, be like-minded with him who said, 'I am determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' I am going out of the world, and I most heartily praise God for it. If I live till next Wednesday, I shall enter upon my sixty-seventh year. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for innumerable mercies." He proceeds in his diary:—

August 24th, 1804.—"I have spent one year at Bristol, in great peace, unity, and harmony; and that both with the people and my fellow-labourers. And the work of the Lord hath, in some measure, prospered in our hands. I am now entering upon a second year in that Circuit, and the forty-third year of my itinerant life. The Searcher of all hearts knows that I would serve Him and my generation to

the utmost. Lord, here I am, Thy willing servant: do with me what Thou wilt; employ me where and as Thou wilt; only be Thou present with me, and right precious to me. Let Thy abundant blessing attend me, and make my way prosperous. If this be the last year of my life, as it probably may, my prayer to the Lord is, that it may be the happiest and the most useful year I have spent, and that I may be fully ready, whensoever or wheresoever the Lord may call me! O my God, let me finish well at last. Be present with me, O my gracious Redeemer, in my latest moments, and let me die on Thy loving bosom; let me fall asleep in Thy gracious arms, and let me live with Thee for ever."

June 21st.—This year he writes as follows, to Mr. Benson:—"I have been earnestly pressed to visit Cornwall this spring; but I have refused. I am too old, and too insignificant, to go out on such popular visits. I wish to retire into some quiet corner, where I may live and die in peace. We are, through mercy, tolerably well at present, blessed be the Lord. Yet we feel the infirmities of age creeping upon us, in some instances, which few know but ourselves. Yet good is the will of the Lord. Time will bring death along with him, ere it be long. But, what then? seeing that to die is inconceivable gain!"

"At the Sheffield Conference, in 1805," says he, in his diary, "I was appointed for Wakefield. This is very agreeable to me, as I am growing old. If it should please God to call me hence the present or next year, my friends would be at little trouble or expense in taking me to Thorner, where I might sleep with my fathers, which I greatly desire, if so the Lord should please to favour me. I am now in my sixty-eighth year, and various bodily infirmities

are come upon me ; but, through the abundant mercy of God, I am able to fulfil the duties of my station at present. How long that may be the case with me, God only knows ; but I am in His hand, and at His disposal : let Him do with me as seemeth Him good. I cannot choose, and He cannot err. He is infinitely wise in all His ways, and holy in all His works. I thankfully acknowledge, that my life has been a life of mercy and love. From my earliest years, the goodness of God hath abounded towards me. The Lord has been the guide of my youth, the strength and stay, the comfort and happiness, of my riper years ; and now, when I am old and grey-headed, He does not, and I trust He will not, forsake me. I can say, on good and scriptural grounds, ‘My heart is fixed, O God ! my heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise.’ And God Himself hath said, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ Having this blessed promise to rely upon, may I not, in the deepest humility and self-abasement, say, ‘Lord, I never will leave nor forsake Thee?’ And why should I ? Where and to whom can I go ? I know, by happy and long experience, that He hath the words of eternal life. My mind has often been much affected by the words of our blessed Lord to His disciples, before His agony in the garden, ‘Ye are they who have continued with Me in My temptation.’ They had not turned their backs on Him, as too many had done. O that I, like them, may continue with my gracious Lord in His temptation ; may abide steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, let what will of storms and tempests arise, till He shall kindly sign my soul’s release, and say unto me, ‘Come up hither, and take thy seat with Me.’ Amen.

‘O! would He more of heaven bestow,
And let the vessel break ;
And let my ransom’d spirit go,
To grasp the God I seek !

‘In rapturous awe on Him to gaze,
Who bought the sight for me ;
And shout and wonder at His grace,
To all eternity.’ ”

The above paragraph is without date; but it seems to have been written either during or immediately after the Sheffield Conference, in 1805; and is the last that he wrote in his diary. October 21st, that year, he wrote to Mr. Benson as follows:—"My complaint increases upon me, so that it is a doubt with me, whether I shall hold out to the end of the year. But, as Mr. Wesley used to observe, I am in good hands, and hope I can say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' I have been greatly favoured for many years with a large share of health, and have infinite cause to be thankful. I have not brought my present complaint upon myself; therefore I am satisfied that the Lord should deal with me as He shall see good."

January 18th, 1806, he writes again to Mr. Benson, to the same purpose: "I am fully satisfied that, if I hold out till the next Conference, it will be all I can possibly do. But it is matter of serious doubt with me, whether I can struggle on till then. Was it not that this poor Circuit has been so peculiarly unfortunate, respecting the preachers appointed to it for the present year,* I certainly should give up without delay. But as we are circumstanced, I would gladly

* Mr. Grant, the only fellow-labourer of Mr. Pawson, in the Wakefield Circuit, had left it immediately after Conference, through indisposition.

keep my place to the end of the year, if the Lord shall please to enable me so to do. I praise Him, I am perfectly satisfied with His dispensations toward me. I am in His all-wise and infinitely-gracious hand, and am satisfied that all things shall work together for my good.

"I have been in deep waters for some time past. My dear partner in life has been brought to the gates of the grave. But the Lord has been very gracious unto me : He has heard the prayer of His people, for ever blessed be His name ! and through His unbounded goodness and infinite mercy, she is now in a very hopeful way ; and I trust, through the goodness of God, will be perfectly restored. I hope I shall never forget this singular mercy, but retain a thankful remembrance of it as long as I live.

"Last Wednesday I attended the funeral of my sister Pawson, my late brother's widow. She was suddenly struck with what was thought a fit of the palsy, and died in great peace in a few days. So you see the Lord is visiting us with breach upon breach, and loudly calling upon me, at least, to be fully ready for the great and very important change. Long life or old age never appeared very desirable to me at any time, and much less so now than ever. The times appear exceedingly gloomy at present ; and what the consequence will be, as to our beloved country, is only known to the wise Disposer of all events. It seems as if nothing could withstand that dreadful scourge. May our merciful God interpose in our behalf ! Amen !"

He wrote again to Mr. Benson, January 25th, when, speaking of some steps he was taking relative to the work of God in a neighbouring Circuit, he says, "You see I am acting as if nothing were the

matter with me, and yet I was obliged to rise out of bed last night no less than twelve times. I have had the advice of several eminent physicians, but nothing that I have yet taken has done me the least good. I believe the grave must be my physician. Glad am I that my time is so near a close."

We conceive that an extract from four or five of his letters to some other friends, written about the same time, will be acceptable to the reader. In one, soon after the Conference, (1805,) he writes thus to Mr. Rankin :—" O that the spirit of faith and prayer, the spirit of power and love, may ever rest upon us ! Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. O, what a mercy of mercies is this, that we can still say, to the honour of God, that, having obtained help of Him, we continue to the present day ! By His almighty arm, and by the comfort and help of His blessed Spirit, we have been preserved from a thousand dangers, and have been Divinely supported, as well as comforted, under all our various crosses and afflictions. We may therefore well say, 'The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.' We feel that age brings its infirmities along with it, and death will come by and by. Well, let it come : I trust we shall be found ready ; and then what a change ! what a prospect ! what a heaven ! what solid peace and permanent happiness ! Who can fully comprehend it ? "

In one, in October, he says, " I bless the Lord, I am in His gracious hands, and have the satisfaction to be fully assured, that He doeth all things well. I wish to be wholly resigned to His will, whose I am, and whom I sincerely desire to serve."

In another, in December, he adds thus :—" I bless the Lord, my mind is perfectly easy ; and I praise

God that I know and feel I am in good hands. The Lord has been wonderfully kind to me, and that for many years: shall I then complain? O no! It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good."

In one of his last, he again says, "What changes have you and I lived to see! How many of our fellow-labourers have gone before us! Where are the Hoppers, the Cownleys, the Jacos, the Murlins, the Hanbys, the Mathers, the Manners, &c., &c., &c., and, above all, our venerable fathers in the Gospel? They are all gone hence, and we see them no more. The time is drawing very near, when we shall be called to follow them through the awful valley; but, I trust, at the same time, we also shall mount up to the throne of God. There we shall unite, with all our beloved friends, in one eternal song of praise unto Him who loved us, and has already washed us from our sins in His own most precious blood! Welcome, thrice welcome, that happy day, when this clay tabernacle shall be taken down, and laid in the dust. I can cheerfully say, with our poet,—

'What is there here to court my stay,
Or hold me back from home;
When angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come?'

"My old and long-tried friend, what a prospect will soon, yea, very soon, open to you and me! I can hardly forbear saying, Lord, hasten the happy time! O, bring near the joyful hour! I think I shall, perhaps, get the start of you; and should it be so, (if the Lord permit it,) I will gladly give you the meeting, and show you the way to the celestial regions of bliss and immortal glory."

He wrote as follows to Mr. Charles Atmore:—

“ WAKEFIELD, *February 7th*, 1806.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ YOUR letter came to hand this morning. I should not have written again so soon, only I think, if I do not, I shall not be able to write at all. This, I am inclined to think, will be the last letter you will receive from me; as I look upon myself to be upon the very brink of death. I preached last Monday night at Wakefield, and I am led to believe that I never shall appear in the pulpit any more. My painful, disagreeable complaint grows upon me very fast. I have been obliged to rise twenty, thirty, yea, forty times in a night. I have consulted many of those who are highly esteemed in the medical line; but no one has been of any use to me yet; nor do I expect to find any help from them. The Lord Himself must be my Physician: I am in His blessed hands, and am perfectly satisfied. I trust I can say, from the ground of my heart, ‘Father, Thy will be done.’ Only let patience have its perfect work. Life is not at all desirable to me. No, no. To be dissolved, and to be with Christ, is far, yea, infinitely better.

“ I now bid you a final adieu; and can only say, with Moses, ‘The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord lift up upon you the light of His countenance. The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and give you peace.’ So prays your dying friend.”

The following letter was addressed to Mr. Entwisle:—

“WAKEFIELD, *February 23d*, 1806.

“O MY BELOVED JOSEPH,

“WHERE shall I begin to tell of the loving-kindness of an infinitely kind and gracious God, extended to a poor, weak, and helpless worm?

‘O for this love, let rocks and hills
Their endless silence break,
And all harmonious (mine in particular) human tongues
The Saviour’s praises speak!’

O yes, my Saviour’s praises speak!

“The pain and sickness I have been called to pass through, I cannot describe. Human language falls far too short. But the sweet peace, the heavenly tranquillity, the holy, delightful, and heavenly joy, which my precious Saviour communicated to my soul, very far exceeds all description. This day fortnight, O with what rapture, with what supreme delight, did I view my heavenly inheritance! My soul, mounted up to the throne of God, my altogether lovely Saviour, the kingdom of immortal glory. The holy, happy spirits I saw worshipping at Emmanuel’s feet, all ready to bid me welcome. In short, heaven itself surrounded me on every side. My beloved brother seemed standing at my bed’s foot! Nothing but my poor, weeping wife, and a poor thin veil of flesh and blood, seemed to stand in my way. No; glory to God in the highest! No clouds, no doubts, no fears. No; all was quietness, peace, and assurance for ever.

“Last Sunday I was very ill indeed. I said to the doctor, ‘You know, sir, that from the beginning I have had no wish to recover; and now I have no hope. I believe I shall die; and it would give me inexpressible pleasure to hear you say, that you have

none; (that is, no hope;) and I believe you have very little hope, or rather none at all, concerning me.' But since then I have gained a little strength. But what shall I say? I am as weak as sickness with violent retching can make me.

"This is perhaps the last letter I shall ever write. Well, be it so; I can hold out no more. I am quite done for. Ten thousand blessings attend you and yours. Amen.

"I am your affectionate uncle,

"J. PAWSON."

ACCOUNT OF MR. PAWSON'S DEATH.

THE last sermon he preached was in Wakefield, on the 3d of February, 1806, from Mark iii. 35: "Whosoever shall do the will of God," &c. He had for some time complained of indisposition, and now expressed himself as incapable of further labour in the ministry. On Thursday, the 6th of February, he was for the first time confined to his room, being now attacked by an inflammation in his bowels. From this period, he appeared to be fast approaching to the borders of the grave. This was to him a source of consolation, and he frequently declared, that when his pain was most acute, his confidence in God was strongest.

On Tuesday, the 25th, to the astonishment of all, he came down stairs without assistance, and, with uncommon earnestness, exhorted those ministers who were present to insist especially on the necessity of enjoying the witness of the Spirit, and holiness of heart; and then declared, that the only foundation

of his hope was the infinite merits of the Lord Jesus. On the same day he said to those around, "All will be well soon. I can speak of my funeral as cheerfully as of my wedding." In a conversation he had with a friend, on the necessity of doing all things to the glory of God, he declared that he had never purchased a single article since his conversion, but with an eye to eternity, and said, "I have nothing to do: all is ready."

Wednesday, 26th.—Having, in the year 1800, under an apprehension that his time would not be long on earth, drawn up a letter of advice to his brethren, to be communicated to them after his death, he, on this day, with great solemnity, put it into the hands of a friend, with an earnest request that it might be read to them at the ensuing Conference, as containing his dying testimony and advice.* And, when several friends were present, after expressing, in the most elevated and forcible language, his glorious prospects into eternity, he began to pray with the utmost fervency; for the Conference, that they might abide by their original doctrines; also, in a most affecting manner, for his wife, that the Lord would enable her cheerfully to resign him into His hands, and support her through this trying scene; and then for every individual present. Though exceedingly weak, he, after this, at the request of Mrs. Pawson, with perfect recollection and presence of mind, baptized a child belonging to a particular friend: this was an affecting sight, and a most solemn season.

On Thursday, the 27th, to Mr. Smith, from Birstal, he said, "Give my love to the congregation, and

* We shall subjoin to this narrative an extract of this letter.

tell them I am going to my precious Saviour; the heaven of heavens is open to my view; I have nothing on my mind; I have nothing to do but die. I have long been sailing to this fair haven. Sometimes the seas have been rough and tempestuous: Satan has often tried to raise a storm, if possible, to upset my little bark; but this he could not effect. No, no; now Satan hath no business with me; he appears to have quitted the field, and given it up as a lost case." At another time he spoke to this effect:—"All the powers of darkness will never be able to extinguish the flame of Divine love that burns within." Soon afterwards he said, "It is enough; Christ died for me; I am mounting up to the throne of God." Then he broke out into the most rapturous strains of praise; and, clasping his hands, said, "I know I am dying; but my death-bed is a bed of roses; I have no thorns planted upon my dying pillow."

On Friday, 28th, being told that he would fatigue himself by speaking too much, he exclaimed, "I spend my breath as freely as I received it." One of his friends reminding him, he had not now to seek the Lord, he replied, "No: I have not to seek the Lord, nor has He to seek me." Some wine and water being offered to him, he (though scarcely able) took it into his own hand, and then, in the most solemn and affecting manner, administered to himself the sacrament. This was indeed a blessed and profitable season to all present.

On Saturday, March 1st, about one o'clock in the morning, he spoke of death with the greatest cheerfulness, and, feeling at his pulse, wondered that he should delay his coming:—"I have no dread; all is prepared; death is welcome." A few hours after

this, he again committed his wife into the hands of God, telling her she would soon follow, and that the Lord would be her refuge and strength. Feeling himself exceedingly weak, he said, "I am on the verge of eternity;" and with his utmost remaining strength exclaimed, "Victory, victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb! Let my soul now take its everlasting flight." After this he sung the following verse from one of his favourite hymns:—

"O! could we but our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise;
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unclouded eyes!"

"Doubts, gloomy doubts! where are they? I know nothing of gloomy doubts; I have none. Where are they gone?" A friend replied, "I suppose they are fallen at the foot of the cross, where Bunyan's Pilgrim lost his burden." "O!" said our reverend father, "but I am now upon the Delectable Mountains; and with the Shepherd's spying-glass I view the heavenly country." At this time there appeared a favourable change in his complaint, which continued about ten days; during which period, through extreme debility, he was incapable of speaking much; but what he said was strongly expressive of his happy state. "I have," said he, at one time, "neither pain, sickness, sorrow, nor a wish to live or die. All is well.

"My Jesus to know, and feel His blood flow,
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below."

Yes, heaven already is begun, everlasting life is won, is won, is won! I die a safe, easy, happy death. Thou, my God, art present; I know, I feel Thou art. Precious Jesus! Glory, glory be to God!"

Sunday, 16th.—Having passed through a very painful night, he said he thought two more such would carry him off; but added, “All is well; my life is hid with Christ in God: and you, my dear partner, will soon follow me.” He then, with peculiar energy, spoke the following lines:—

“Trembling, hoping, ling’ring, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!”

Monday, 17th.—Being asked if he wanted anything, he replied, “I want nothing but my blessed Jesus, and death. But I have Him now: thanks be to God, Christ is mine. I am dying, but I shall live for ever. Christ is all in all to me: death is indeed desirable; but all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.” One present said, “You will have a blessed change.” “Yes,” said he, “I know I shall.” To one who came to see him, he said, “My kind friend, I am drawing fast to a conclusion. O, my Jesus, it is all light and glory! I am completely happy; completely happy.”

On Tuesday, the 18th, suffering much from difficulty of breathing, he said, “Dying work is hard work: but now my strength fails, God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever; yes, for ever and ever. Christ is my Saviour, my All. Help me to render unto Thee the praise so justly due to Thine excellent name for the support I feel. Thou dost not suffer me to faint: no;

‘From Zion’s top the breezes blow,
Refreshing all the vales below.’”

About eleven o’clock at night he began to be much worse; respiration was exceedingly difficult, and he appeared to suffer much pain.

Early on Wednesday morning, he said to his

nephew and fellow-labourer, who sat by his bed-side, "I feel I am dying, but must get up and die in my chair." Soon after he was seated, he said, "Now kneel down, both of you, and pray that I may be released, if it be the will of God." After they had prayed, he took hold of the hand of each of them, and gave them his dying blessing. He then lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Soon after he was again put into bed, and said, "My God! my God! my God!" These were the last words he distinctly uttered. He was now incapable of speaking, and sunk very fast, but was perfectly sensible to the end. He died about twenty minutes past nine o'clock in the morning, apparently without any struggle or pain, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and forty-fourth of his ministry; leaving a most glorious testimony, that he was gone to be for ever with the Lord.

Mr. Benson preached a funeral sermon on the death of Mr. Pawson, in the City-Road chapel, London; and, preparatory to that service, he received the following letter from their mutual friend Mr. Rankin:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"LOVE to the memory of our (once) much-beloved but now deceased friend and brother, Pawson, constrains me to give you a few particulars concerning him, which may be of use to the living, who hear you this day. In the year 1762 I rode from the Sevenoaks Circuit, in order to attend the Conference, then held in Leeds. There it was I first saw my much-esteemed and greatly-beloved friend: at that Conference he came out on trial; and with

what general acceptance, as well as usefulness, he has laboured in his Lord's vineyard, from that period till his death, his brethren in the ministry, and thousands besides, are real witnesses. During the first seven years of his ministerial labours, as we were stationed in different parts of the kingdom, we only had the pleasure of seeing one another when we met at our Conferences. In the years '69 and '70 we were both stationed in London; and then commenced that union of hearts and labours that will only have its consummation in a glorious eternity. We endeavoured to strengthen each other's hands in the Lord; as also to exert all our little abilities in that work in which we were mutually engaged. When I returned from America in the year 1778, we were both stationed in London for two years again. The seasons we enjoyed of mutual intercourse one with another, as well as in our united labours, to promote the glory of God, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures, will never be obliterated from my mind. We not only freely conferred together, but often poured out our souls to God for each other's happiness, as also for the blessed work in which we were engaged. Those seasons of happy intercourse with God and each other are deeply engraven on my heart; and, I doubt not, are recorded in the annals above. In the year 1780 we were stationed together in Bristol. This was a year of much real happiness to both our souls; and our labours were not in vain in the Lord. The seasons for spiritual conversation and prayer were neither forgotten nor omitted. The return of that holy and venerable servant of God, the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, from the Continent, in the spring, 1781, was rendered a peculiar blessing to my deceased friend, as well as to myself. While he was

with us in Bristol, his prayers, preaching, and conversation were indeed a Divine stimulus to both our souls. We often spoke of them with pleasure; and the salutary effects which they left on both our minds were beyond the power of words to express. At the ensuing Conference my esteemed friend was separated from me; but the frequent letters which passed between us served to keep alive that sincere regard and mutual affection which we felt for each other. We rejoiced in each other's happiness, and in the prosperity of the work of God. I found him the same steady and invariable friend at all times, and in every place, wherever he was called to labour. Neither time, place, nor distance made the least alteration. Indeed, the steadiness of his friendship was such, that, except our Father in the Gospel, I scarce ever knew his equal. When he once sincerely loved his friend, it was not a little that would make him change his esteem, confidence, or affection. He was not one of those 'who wonder at the strange man's face, as one they never had seen before.' I shall never forget that sincere mark of his love which he showed to me three years ago last June. As soon as he heard I was come to Leeds, (to which place I then paid a visit,) he walked from Birstal to give me the meeting. The happiness of the interview was mutual and pleasing on both sides. We had many profitable hours together during the six weeks I spent in Leeds and its vicinity. There was another most pleasing trait in his character. He was a man of peace and love. This was manifested on a variety of occasions, the particulars of which need not now be detailed. The God of peace and love (with the word of Christ) dwelt richly in his heart; and from this permanent fountain the

streams flowed. The four last years he was stationed in London were years of unspeakable pleasure to my mind. Many, very many, were the hours in which we took sweet counsel together, how to promote each other's progress in the Divine life; as also to render each other still more useful to the souls of our fellow-creatures. The integrity and uprightness of mind which I always discovered in my deceased friend, so endeared him to me, that, while memory remains, his loved memorial will never depart from my heart. He never spared himself in his public labours for the good of souls. He was long blessed with health and strength, and he laid it out to promote the best of causes,—the glory of God in the salvation of men.

“He loved the doctrines and discipline of the people called Methodists, and that from his very heart. It was his meat and drink to enforce both the one and the other. And in the prosperity of Zion he always greatly and sincerely rejoiced; and he felt keenly, and mourned deeply, for everything that had a tendency to the contrary. In short, his whole soul was in the work of his adorable Saviour; and such he lived, and such he died.

“THOMAS RANKIN.”

We insert here an extract of a letter of Mr. Pawson, addressed to the Conference, and containing his dying advice to his brethren:—

“WAKEFIELD, *February 26th*, 1806.

“VERY DEAR AND HIGHLY-ESTEEMED BRETHREN,

“EVER since I have known you, I have most sincerely and ardently loved you; and never had a thought, or a wish, but to live, and labour, and die

with you. The Searcher of all hearts knoweth that I have rejoiced in your prosperity, and have mourned over you when oppressed, or when it has not been well with any of you. But I am now about to leave you for a season, and am going to unite with my fathers and brethren who have gone before me, to that city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. I die in the full assurance of a hope of being inconceivably and eternally happy with God my Saviour, and with all His redeemed people. I joyfully confess that I have not followed a cunningly-devised fable. I have not served God in vain. He hath not been to me 'as waters that fail,' but rather 'as a place of broad rivers and streams;' so that I can declare, upon good ground, that not 'one thing hath failed of all that He hath promised;' but 'goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life,' and I know that I shall 'dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

"I bless the Lord, I can declare in His presence, that in all my doings among you, my eye has been single. However I may have been mistaken, I have simply intended the glory of God, and the prosperity of His work. Therefore my mind is perfectly at ease respecting the part I have acted.

"May I be permitted, as a dying man, to give you a little advice? which I hope, when I am no more, you will seriously think of:—

"1. Take great care that you all constantly maintain the primitive Methodist spirit. Be serious, spiritual, and heavenly-minded. Be lively, zealous, and active in the service of God. Be crucified to this vain world, and filled with that Holy Spirit which raises the soul from earth to heaven. You are in great danger of conforming to the world in your

dress, in your manners, and in your spirit and temper of mind. O, watch and pray against this deadly evil; and let not your wives and children fall into this snare of the devil.

“2. Take care that you constantly, clearly, fully, and pointedly preach the good old Methodist doctrines. They are the very truth, as revealed in God’s own book. Never lose sight of ‘the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins;’ and the full renewal of the soul in righteousness and true holiness. Constantly preach Christ, in all the riches of His grace, and offer in His name a present, free, and full salvation,—a salvation from the guilt, the power, and the very being of sin.

“3. Abide by every branch of our discipline. You have known the blessing which has attended it; but never try to make the door of the church narrower than God hath made the door of heaven. Never, no, never while you live, give the least countenance to anything like a persecuting spirit.

“4. Take all possible care to maintain a lively, spiritual, heart-searching ministry. To this end I entreat you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, never, no, never try to make ministers by substituting learning, or anything else, in the room of the call of God, and those spiritual gifts and graces which He always did and always will bestow upon those whom He sends to labour in His vineyard. The great Head of the church will always take care to provide a sufficient number of faithful men to publish the glad tidings of salvation in His name. It is your duty to pray that the Lord of the harvest may send forth labourers; but never try to make them: He will do that Himself. Religion has been utterly ruined in almost every particular body of Christians

by this deadly evil ; the establishing a learned, instead of a lively spiritual, ministry.

“5. Be exceedingly careful in receiving candidates for the ministry. On no account whatsoever admit any but what you have sufficient reason to believe are soundly converted to God, are zealous for His glory, and who only wish to spend and be spent in His work. If ever the life and power of godliness begin to decay among the Methodists, look well to yourselves ; for the first cause will be with the preachers. As long as you are truly devoted to God, and faithfully preach His word, a blessing must attend it, and the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. But if you do not live in the Spirit, and copy the example of your Lord, you have no right to expect that He will cause His blessing to attend your labours ; and your spirit will but too soon be observed by the people, and they will lose the life and power of godliness, as well as yourselves.

“Thus I have freely communicated my dying thoughts to you, my honoured and dear brethren ; and have no more to say, but only to pray that the God of all grace may be ever present with you all, and that He may crown your labours with abundant success, till each of you shall be called to receive your glorious reward in the kingdom of your Father above.

“I am, while living, and shall not be less so when dead,

“Your most sincere and affectionate brother,
and cordial friend.”

*Some additional Traits of the Character of the late
Mr. Pawson. By Mr. Adam Clarke.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "METHODIST MAGAZINE."

MUCH respect has been already paid to the memory of our lately-deceased venerable friend Mr. John Pawson, both from the pulpit and the press; and most circumstances of his life and death are now well known to our congregations in general. But as several of those traits of character which could only appear in very private life, and would be remarked by those alone who were most intimately acquainted with him, have not been distinctly noticed either in the account of his life, or the sermons which have been published on the occasion of his death, permit me to bring a few additional circumstances before your numerous readers, that the man and his communication may be more distinctly observed when exhibited in those points of light in which he is most interesting, and his example most impressive and edifying.

In the years 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, and 1797, I travelled with Mr. Pawson; the two former in Liverpool, the three latter in London. When in Liverpool we lived almost next door to each other, and were frequently together morning, noon, and night; for the society being in a disturbed state, we were obliged to unite our counsels and exertions, at all times, to prevent schisms and to promote peace. It was in these troublous times that I had the opportunity of seeing Mr. Pawson in every point of view, and of estimating his character; and from my own observations, made principally at that time,

the following memoranda are chiefly drawn, which, the reader will be pleased to understand, have all been confirmed by the testimony of his pious widow.

1. Mr. Pawson's deportment was at all times grave, dignified, and recollected. He had not a variety of forms for different occasions; his character was fixed and permanent, so that he was the same in spirit, whether in the pulpit, in his family, or among his friends.

2. Sacred things were ever treated by him with that honour and reverence which are their peculiar due. He highly esteemed every ordinance of God, and recommended each by his warmest exhortations and unvarying practice. In social and family prayer, his manner was remarkably animated and devout; and in his addresses to his Maker, that intimate acquaintance which he had with Him was easily discernible.

3. Family prayer he never omitted, nor slightly passed over, however fatigued; judging that nothing but the overwhelming power of disease could be a sufficient excuse for the neglect of this most important duty. His manner in prayer, whether in private or public, was worthy of observation. He always knelt: standing he deemed improper and irreverent. Bishop Hall has recommended both postures: "I will stand," said he, "as a servant before my Master; or kneel as a subject before my Prince." When we come to receive the commands of God in reading His word, for instance, the former posture may be very proper: but when we come as sinners to deprecate the wrath of an offended Judge, and to supplicate for mercy, the humblest posture is the most becoming. He was pained to see the

standing system gaining ground among us in public prayer, and discountenanced it by every proper means. God forbid that it should prevail! Situations, postures, and circumstances have a remarkable effect on the mind, though they often exert their influence without being particularly perceived. Hence the posture in which we habitually put ourselves in order to slumber or sleep, almost infallibly induces the thing. But it requires only a small measure of reflection to convince us, that those postures in which the body is wont to find its ease, or vacate itself to comparative carelessness, must be improper in those acts of worship where the mental energy is seldom called forth without interesting and employing every corporeal power. Kneeling upright, he fervently recommended, after the example of Mr. Wesley, who always insisted on the preachers acting thus. These may appear to many little things; but their effects are neither little nor unimportant. Kneeling down, and then leaning the body forward so as to rest on a bed, chair, &c., may be profitable to meditation, but is often prejudicial to the genuine spirit of prayer. Besides, it is a posture in which many are apt to fall asleep. I have witnessed this painfully on a variety of occasions.

4. At breakfast, dinner, &c., he never asked a blessing sitting. This he deemed a very unbecoming posture, and was heartily pained at several of our people adopting what he used to call "this new mode." As soon as breakfast was over, he went to family worship, which he never permitted anything to put aside. His method was to read a chapter in his regular order of going through the Bible, and then sing a few verses of a hymn before he went to prayer. On these occasions his prayers were always

lively, and never long. I cannot forbear remarking here, that though small families, insulated in domestic occupations, may find that after breakfast is a convenient time for family worship; yet I am satisfied, from long and close observation, that before this meal is the best time. All the family must, in general, come together to breakfast; immediately after, they become scattered to their different occupations, so that, in many cases, it is impossible to get them all together to prayer. This I have often been perplexed with, especially in families that do not live by rule; and how few are there that do! and to prevent or cure this evil, I always seize the time of their gathering together to food, in order to induce them to offer their joint supplications to God: for then, temptations to dissipation are less frequent, and calls to go out on business seldom occur, or are felt commanding, till that necessary meal be received.

5. Though Mr. Pawson was a man of a comparatively good constitution, yet he never could preach at five in the morning without being very seriously indisposed: he, however, frequently attended his brethren's ministry at that hour. His case puzzled Mr. Wesley more than anything of the kind he had ever met with. It is well known, that he held it to be the indispensable duty of every preacher, to preach at five in the morning wherever he could get a congregation; and that it contributed greatly to mental and corporal vigour: but on several occasions he had the opportunity of seeing alarming consequences of exertions of this kind in Mr. Pawson, and was obliged to allow that his, at least, was an exempt case, for which he could not possibly account.

6. Though Mr. Pawson's talents as a preacher were not either extraordinary or splendid, yet he was

generally popular, and always useful. His voice was clear and sweet, yet strong and commanding; his manner plain and unaffected, but uncommonly animated and impressive. Every serious mind felt an unction in all he said; and perhaps there was no case where a person in spiritual distress left his ministry without having received comfort and encouragement. Before he went into the pulpit he took due care to secure to himself an hour of retirement, that he might come immediately from the presence of God into the congregation. He who can habitually act otherwise is never likely to be of much use to the church of God. Preachers should make it a point of conscience never to go out to tea the evening they have to preach, as this must necessarily break in on the evening's hour of retirement, and tend greatly to dissipate and unhinge the mind.

7. No congregation ever waited for Mr. Pawson: he was always in the pulpit precisely at the appointed time. He saw that want of punctuality in this respect had lessened the influence and hurt the usefulness of others, as well as injured the congregations; and therefore he ever avoided it.

8. The matter of his discourses was sound and edifying. He seldom preached without bringing before the eyes of his hearers the outlines, at least, of all the grand doctrines of the Gospel. The opinions which state that Christ did not die for every man, and that indwelling sin must continue in the soul of a believer till death, he considered to be horrible and anti-Christian: against these he raised his voice in a decisive but temperate manner. A free, full, and present salvation from all the guilt, all the power, and all the inbeing of sin, was his constant theme; and though he never forgot to exhort

believers to have respect to every moral duty, yet he took care to show that these without Christ were nothing, and that from Him alone all pure morality must necessarily proceed. Thus, like a wise master-builder, he was careful to lay his foundation aright, so that in his own soul and in others the superstructure might be permanent and glorious.

9. The doctrines of the witness of the Spirit, and salvation from all sin in this life, he considered a depositum entrusted by the especial mercy of God to the care of the Methodists; and was greatly distressed when he found any among ourselves denying them, or attempting to fret them away by far-fetched refined speculations.

10. The zeal with which he urged penitents to look for present pardon, and believers to expect immediate deliverance from all sin, was great and exemplary. Nothing short of this experience he considered as salvation; and multitudes felt the power of his persuasive arguments in reference to these grand objects, and became living and dying witnesses of their truth.

11. For several of the last years of his life the love of Christ, in dying for the sin of the world, was a subject on which he particularly delighted to dwell: the heavenly principle was rapidly increasing in his own soul, and from the abundance of his heart his mouth spoke. To all who enjoyed a measure of communion with God, his discourses on this subject were exceedingly profitable.

12. In his own house his deportment was steady, and sufficiently authoritative, but always easy and cheerful. Regularity and economy marked his every step, and his family were moulded after his own spirit. Each seemed to feel reverence for the other,

and yet there was no gloomy reserve; all were cheerful, because all were happy.

13. In company he was one of the most instructive companions I ever met with. Having lived long in the work, travelled much, and seen a vast variety of men and things, which he was accustomed to view as connected links in the great providential chain of causes and effects, he acquired, through their means, much general knowledge, and much experience. He had selected from his own observation a great number of anecdotes, some illustrative of the fantastic varieties of the human character, others of the providence, and others of the gracious operations, of God. These he detailed on all proper occasions in a very pleasing language and impressive manner. He had also acquainted himself very extensively with the ecclesiastical history of the past age, and was deeply skilled in that of the present, as he had been almost at the beginning of that great work which God, by the instrumentality of the people called Methodists, had performed in these countries and in America. This made his company very pleasant, and very interesting. Knowing the end from the beginning, he had it in his power to give much useful information to his junior brethren of the spreading of that cloud which first appeared as a human hand; and to call back those who were becoming eccentric, to those first principles on which God had founded, and by which He has regulated, the whole of our economy and usefulness, as a religious people.

14. I never met with an instance in the whole course of my acquaintance, whether religious or literary, where that description given by the Rev.

Samuel Wesley was more strictly exemplified than in Mr. Pawson,

“Not grave with sternness, nor with lightness free.”

He never trifled ; he never impaired his authority or respectability as a minister of God by any lightness or improper compliances. He could not, he would not, accommodate himself to any kind of company : “I cannot,” said he, “talk for the sake of talking, nor merely to oblige, when I have reason to believe no real good can be produced by it.” I have been with him more than once, where there was such company as neither of us could be free in ; and in such cases he was constantly silent, except when spoken to ; yet even in his silence his pleasing countenance was a most intelligible index of his happy mind.

15. Though he was remarkable for the cheerfulness of his general temper, yet from the frequent impositions which had been practised upon him, and the fear he had of entering into the spirit of the world, he was rendered sufficiently cautious ; and this caused him to behave with distance and reserve to those he did not know. This induced some superficial observers to think he was morose, and others, that he was unkind. He confessed he was not very easy of access to indiscriminate visitors ; and that nature and grace had conjoined to make him so : “Were I otherwise,” said he, “my time would be more intruded on than it generally is.”

16. He was very susceptible of friendship, and formed many connexions of this kind, especially among the preachers : but in some cases this did not contribute to his comfort ; for as he opened his

whole heart to his friend, without any kind of reserve, he ever expected the same in return, and could not brook the shadow of neglect. Perhaps there is no love without jealousy; and where this exists, there must be a proportionate measure of anxiety and inquietude.

17. The principal failing I ever noticed in my venerable friend was too great a readiness to permit slanderous accusations, or slight evidences of unkindness, to induce him to break with some of those who, I am conscious, ever duly appreciated his excellencies, and prized his worth. He was, however, not obstinate in these reverses; and when convinced that he had been misled or mistaken, his affection returned to that channel in which it delighted to flow. He had several particular favourites among the preachers; and it is worthy of remark, that none of them ever disgraced him, and they now deservedly rank among the most excellent in our Connexion. Singling out such men as the objects of his confidence was at once a proof of the sincerity of his piety, and the correctness of his judgment.

18. His attachment to the cause of God was strong and invariable. The peace and prosperity of the work he sought and promoted with his whole soul and strength. He rejoiced in the welfare of Jerusalem, and deeply mourned in her adversities. When by the publication of his sermon on the Balm of Gilead, he had given that occasion which he never designed to his adversaries to say all manner of evil against the work of God, he was exceedingly distressed.* None can tell the deep agony his heart

* In his private diary this matter is noted in a most affecting manner. He feared lest the clamour that was raised against him

went through: that it hurt his constitution, and brought on his death sooner than in the course of nature it would have happened, I have no doubt. Let his adversaries hear this, and reap from it all the vindictive gratification they are capable of. His conduct for more than half a century, in trying and uncertain times, had sufficiently attested his affection to his country, and his loyalty to his king; but because there were a few sentences that could be perverted to a meaning, which in the most solemn manner he disavowed, and which every man that knew him was assured he never intended, he was hunted down by two or three desperate and uncharitable writers, as though he had been the most noisome of wild beasts, and the most seditious and inhumane of men. May God forgive them! and I have authority to say he forgave them from his whole heart; and that during the whole of this fiery trial, he was never known once to murmur, or to speak one unkind word of his persecutors.

19. His management of the concerns of the work of God in the Circuits where he laboured was judicious and conciliating in a very eminent degree. He had no jars where he laboured; his authority was ever exercised with mildness and moderation, and was universally respected. It was easy to see that he had no end in view but the glory of God; and was always ready to sacrifice his ease, property, health, and life itself to the promoting the religion of Christ among men. Hence, no one could fall out with him, who had the same end only in view.

should be levelled against the cause of God, and often wished that his own name might be rather blotted out from among the living than that the cause of God should suffer any injury on his account.

20. As God's glory was his sole aim, he was ever on the Lord's side; he could not temporize; he was instantly decided when he saw what he believed to be God's truth, and his own duty. In some cases he might be mistaken; but his object and principles never changed. He was what he used to say every genuine Christian should be, upright and downright.

21. For his conscientious attachment to truth he was remarkable. He never suffered himself to tell the same story in two different ways; and so fully had he habituated himself to integrity and scrupulous exactness in words, as well as in actions, that I have often observed him to repeat the same stories and anecdotes, on different occasions, in precisely the same terms, without variation of language or additional circumstance! This was not merely the result of a good memory, but of a sound judgment, and a conscientious heart.

22. I have already referred to his economy in general; but there is one branch of it so intimately connected with his uprightness, that it should not be slightly passed by: I mean the great care he took of the furniture he found in the different Circuit-houses where he lodged. He never permitted anything to be wasted, nor suffered any injury to be done to the meanest article, leaving everything at least in as good repair as he found it.

As he was a strict economist, and lived by rule, he was never hurried: everything was referred to its own place and time. As soon as it was necessary to perform any particular act, he never deferred it for an hour; so that his work was always done in due time, and he was generally beforehand with it. Temporal matters he never named till they became necessary,

and never repeated afterwards, unless through the inattention of others they had been neglected. This kept him free from dissipation of spirit; and his mind was so recollected, and possessed of such self-government, that, after having fulfilled any extra engagement, he would return to his usual employment as if he had suffered no interruption.

23. His judgment was remarkably correct. I have had occasion to admire its decisions in a multitude of difficult cases. As his understanding was clear, and his conscience pure, he seldom found much difficulty in apprehending the truth; and as he had nothing in view but the glory of God and the welfare of His cause, he formed his decisions with firmness and promptitude.

24. He never courted the friendship of the affluent, either in our societies, or among our hearers. In this respect he had a noble and independent mind. He endeavoured to think well of all; but he could not, as many have done, pay more attention to the rich than to the poor, nor slacken the reins of discipline on their account. There are many who continually forget that a man is before God simply what he is in his soul, and not what he is in his purse or possessions. Some carry this inattention so far, that the smallest dawning of spiritual good in a rich or honourable man is magnified into a constellation of excellencies. This is certainly knowing a man after the flesh, and consulting the sight of the eye only in judgment. The consequence of this conduct is ruinous beyond calculation. The rich man thus treated imagines himself to be what he is not; and trusting to the fancied goodness of his state, he halts long before his race is finished. Is it not through the influence of false friends and flatterers

that so few of those who are in affluence ever excel in deep piety?

25. Salvation from the present evil world according to the will of God is much rarer among the followers of Christ, than from their privileges and calling we might naturally expect: and hence there is much of that fear of man prevalent among the professors of Christianity, which leads them to suppress the truth, lest they should give offence. From Mr. Pawson's heart this, with the love of the world, had been long banished. When he first found peace with God, the love of the world was entirely taken away, and could never afterwards resume its ancient seat; indeed he often wondered how persons could reconcile the love of God with either the desire of the eye, the desire of the flesh, or the pride of life. The attempt to do this is a notorious profanation of the grace of the Gospel, and should be ranked with the basest crimes.

26. Of Mr. Pawson's deep piety, of his extensive usefulness, and of his glorious end, others have spoken: I therefore forbear entering into these subjects, as they are amply treated in the account of his life and death, and in the funeral sermons by Messrs. Moore and Roberts, already published. One thing more I beg leave to present to the reader's view,—that uncommon ease and copious flow of language remarkable in his conversation, epistolary correspondence, and in his preaching. As he had very few advantages from education, this could be attributed to no other cause but the order and harmony of his mind. Through this, every faculty performed its proper functions, and every idea had its peculiar place; whence it came forth in its regular connexion on every proper occasion, without

irrelevance on the one hand, or confusion on the other.

I cannot conclude this short sketch better than in the words of one who knew him better than all others, and whose loss can only be made up by that all-sufficient God who has graciously promised to be the husband of the widow.

27. "If my late husband was esteemed a light in the church of God, his behaviour in his family was such to us. To take any part of his character separate from the rest, perhaps little striking may be seen in it: but when we consider that assemblage of the graces of the Spirit which were combined to give lustre to it, then the whole becomes striking and worthy of notice. He had a good natural understanding, and a solid judgment, improved by deep thinking: his words, therefore, carried weight with them. They were not delivered at random, but sprung from a mind that was accustomed to weigh what it was going to utter before a word was spoken. He was a polished stone, prepared by the Divine Master to glorify Him in His temple here below, by turning many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. Some of these, after living a life of piety here on earth, finished their course with triumph; others are yet in the wilderness, praising God that they ever heard the Gospel from his lips. After labouring in the Lord's vineyard forty-four years, a great many were witnesses of the consolation he derived from those precious and essential truths he had been enforcing upon others during that period. He found them a solid foundation in his dying moments, enabling him to shout Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb.

“Whilst I cannot but feelingly lament the loss I have sustained in being deprived of such a husband, and the church of such an exemplary pattern, may I with them profit by the example he has left us, and follow him as he followed Christ !

“ F. PAWSON.”

28. The following letter, which is the last he ever wrote, a short time after which his right hand forgot its cunning, I shall subjoin as his own last testimony to the power of God to save, and his concern for the full establishment and final prevalence of those glorious truths which he now found to be the support of his soul, when his heart and flesh failed. The occasion of it was simply this. On hearing that his disorder was rapidly gaining ground, but not knowing how low he was then reduced, I wrote a very pressing letter to him and Mrs. Pawson, to take easy journeys, and come immediately up to London, where he might have the best medical advice, and to continue with me till the Lord should be pleased to restore him. In this I was affectionately joined by my brother and sister Butterworth, who wished him to come and make their house his home. When this letter was read to him, he was much affected, and poured out his soul in ardent prayer for those who had requested him to take this journey. Notwithstanding his great weakness, when his nephew Mr. Entwisle, and Mr. James Burton, had retired from his room for a short time, he struggled out of bed, put on his morning-gown, got his writing-desk to his bedside, and wrote the following comparatively long letter, after which he never dictated nor wrote another :—

“ WAKEFIELD, *Friday, March 7th, 1806.*

29. “ O MY ADAM, my most affectionately beloved and highly esteemed friend and brother, for whom, God knoweth, I ever had a sincere regard, but now tenfold more so than ever ; I return you my sincerest and most cordial thanks for your kind invitation to me to come to London. Alas, how little did you know the state I was then in ! Nevertheless, your love and kindness so tenderly expressed, call very loudly upon me for suitable returns of gratitude and love to you, and good and tender-hearted Mrs. Clarke, as well as to kind and generous Mr. and Mrs. Butterworth, to whom return my warmest acknowledgments.

“ O my dear brother, what I have suffered, what I now continue to suffer, and what still lies before me, is only known to God. But, glory to God in the highest, I am in the hands of Him who ever was, and who never can cease to be, infinitely wise and infinitely good ; whom I have found to be so to me, an unworthy worm, to the present hour. For ever blessed be His glorious name !

“ What I have experienced of the power and goodness, of the unmerited mercy and love, of God during this affliction, is not to be described by me. O the views, the soul-transporting views, of that heavenly felicity that my soul hath been favoured with ! My loving friend, praise the name of the Lord with me and for me. And you may tell all my beloved London friends, that J. Pawson dies a witness of the saving power of those precious truths which have been taught, believed, and experienced among us from the beginning of Methodism. Alas, for all the double refinements which a Mr. —, or anyone else, may have found out ! Give me good old Methodism in

its unadorned simplicity and plainness ; in its spirit, life, and power ; and they may (set) up one church, and try to set up another as high as they can. But God, and God alone, shall be exalted, and His name glorified by all His redeemed creatures through one eternal day.*

“I write thus freely to you from the grave’s mouth, because I know your very soul loves the good old truth ; and I trust you will live and die by it, and in full possession of it in your heart ! But I must give up ; I can do no more. I have had a sore bout with this incoherent scrawl ; and whether you will be able to make it out or not, I cannot tell. My head is so weak that I can scarcely spell a word right.

“Ten thousand times ten thousand blessings attend you, your beloved Mary, and all your family ! God Almighty bless, preserve, and keep you, and make you an abundant blessing to your family, the church, and the world ! J. Pawson’s dying prayer for you is, that goodness and mercy may follow you all the days of your life, and that you may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever ! Surely, if the love of the people and preachers, joined together, can keep me from the grave, I must not die at this time. I never saw anything like it in the whole course of my life.

“Farewell for ever ! Bless the Lord for me, and we shall all eternally enjoy Him very soon.

* Mr. Pawson alludes here to the attempts made by a certain person to invalidate the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, by endeavouring to prove that no more can be meant by it than the confidence and satisfaction which are felt by believers from a consciousness of the gracious change made in their state, and the sincerity of their heart towards God.

"I am most affectionately and eternally yours in
Christ Jesus,

"J. PAWSON."

30. Thus lived, thus died, John Pawson ; a man of irreproachable integrity, of unspotted life, and of very extensive usefulness. As he honoured his God with his body, soul, and substance, so God honoured him with the highest affection and strongest confidence of His church and people, with an unction and baptism of the Holy Ghost, and with such a victory and triumph over sin, death, and the grave, as would have been glorious even in apostolic times.

It is scarcely necessary to say to your readers in general, that this heavenly man entered on the enjoyment of the eternal inheritance on the morning of Wednesday, March 19th, 1806, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. Precious in the sight of God is the death of His saints ; and their name shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

ADAM CLARKE.

LONDON, *January 1st*, 1807.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. SAMPSON STANIFORTH.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I NEVER thought I should be called upon to appear in print, or to give an account of myself, considering how many of my brethren there are who have not only deeper experience, but far greater abilities, and more time than I have. But since you desire it of me, I think it my duty to obey those that are over me in the Lord. I now, therefore, cast my mite into the treasury, and pray God it may be profitable to some soul. I shall first speak of my life from the time of my birth till I was about twenty-five years old; and, secondly, from the time that God called me, to the present time. I am sensible my case is peculiar, both in a state of sin and in my conversion to God; and my account of it must be very imperfect, as I never kept any diary, and can only set down a few things that I can call to mind, after so many years.

I was born at Sheffield, in December, 1720. My

father, who was a cutler, had thirteen children; but only four lived to years of maturity. There was no care taken in my education; none in the family having the form, much less the power, of religion: so that, while I was young, I heard nothing about either religion or morality. Hence it was that I had no conviction of any kind, no fear of God before my eyes, no thought of His providence, of His sparing mercy, or indeed of His having anything to do in the world. Nay, I was totally averse to all good, and hated the very appearance of religion. And in this deplorable state I continued, till I was fourteen years of age.

I was then put apprentice to a baker. This was a very good place for my body; but no care at all was taken of my soul: only that sometimes my master made me read on Sunday a chapter in the Bible. But I knew not what it meant, nor why it was called the word of God, or what people went to church for. From fourteen to seventeen, I was diligent in my business, and gave satisfaction to my master. But all this time, I never once thought, Why was I born into the world? What is my business in it? Or where shall I go when this life is over?

I was now fast bound with the chains of sin, filled with unholy desires, and, as often as occasion offered, bringing them into practice. And I had not the least remorse for any of the sins I was daily committing; being as perfectly "without God in the world" as the beasts that perish. I now got into bad company, and by their advice and encouragement ran into open wickedness, gaming in particular to the great disadvantage of my master, and the great sorrow of my parents. And yet I still had not

the least compunction, nor any more sorrow for sin than a wild ass's colt.

I began about this time to get into company with the soldiers that were in the town. And I frequently told my mother that I had an inclination to go into the army. This troubled her much, and she often with tears expostulated with me concerning it. To keep me out of it, she used to supply me with money. But this only enabled me to keep more company, and to run into all manner of sin. Several times she fetched me away from my companions at night; but whenever I could, I ran away from her, and got to them again; and in this ungodly course I went on, till I was about nineteen years of age.

One night I was in company with a neighbour's son, who had been in the army some time, and was now absent from it upon a furlough, to spend a few days with his friends. After we had been drinking till about eleven o'clock, he asked me whether I would not list. I immediately answered, I would; and he gave me three guineas, and a crown to drink His Majesty's health: we continued drinking all night. In the morning one came in that knew me, who went and told my mother. She came with one of my sisters, and took me home, and put me to bed. Afterwards she went and returned the money which I had received, and with a little more bought me off. I then went home to my master, who received me very kindly, and did not upbraid me with anything that I had done.

But all this made not the least impression upon me. I felt no gratitude either to God or man. About eight days after, as I was one morning going out with my bread, I met the sergeant and two more

soldiers, and told them I wanted to list. We went into an alehouse together, and I received the money from them. I sent the basket back to my master, and immediately went two miles to the justice's to take the oath. About a fortnight after, I left Sheffield. All my friends were in tears; but it made no impression on me: as I was not only fierce and passionate, but also sullen and malicious, without any feeling of humanity. Instead of weeping with those that wept, I even rejoiced in their sorrow.

Hence we marched for Edinburgh. We arrived there on the 15th of the November preceding the great frost. I was drafted into one of the companies that lay in the castle: there my hardships began. There were no barracks then, but we lay upon straw in the vault, and throughout the winter had but one fire for seventy men. Through my own sin and folly, my little pay was soon gone; and generally two days in a week, Tuesday and Friday, being the days before the pay-days, I had little or nothing to eat. But even this, together with hard duty, made no manner of impression upon my heart. Nay, I became more hardened, and added profane swearing to my other sins. From thence we marched to Glasgow, where I several times heard that servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. But I had no conception of what he said, nor any desire to profit by it. We next marched to Ayr, where a kind Providence watched over me for good. For I and two more wild fellows took a boat, and rowed down toward the sea. But we had not skill to manage it, and the ebbing tide was carrying us down to the sea; when just at the end of the pier, the boat gave a turn, and we caught hold of a post. Here we held, till help came; otherwise we had probably gone to the bottom of the sea, and to the

bottomless pit at once, as we were all sinning with a high hand, drinking in iniquity like water.

From this place we marched to Perth, and lay there some time. During our stay, I paid my addresses to a young woman. But though she loved me, I did not behave to her with that honour I should have done. Just at that time the old Highland regiment came to quarter at Perth; and I was remanded to the other side of the river, to a little village called Bridge-End. She had some relations in this regiment, to whom she told what had passed between us. They sent for me, and, for some time, behaved with a deal of kindness, expecting that I would give them farther promises of fulfilling my engagement with her. She was present at the same time. Finding I did not in any wise answer their expectations, they began talking together in their own language, and, as I could not but observe, with great warmth of spirit. Though I did not, she understood what they said, and endeavoured to pacify them. A little after she rose up, called me out, told me, they were determined to kill me, and begged me, for God's sake, to return with all speed into my own quarters: I took her advice, and returned immediately. I came to town again the next market-day. They heard of it, and were in search of me, being fully determined upon revenge. But she found me out first, informed me of their fixed resolution to murder me, and insisted on my crossing the water without delay. I ran to the water-side. A boat was just going off, into which I stepped: but before we were half over the water, they came running down, with their swords drawn, to the river-side. But they durst go no farther, there being strict orders that none should pass the river.

We marched from Perth to Edinburgh, and thence to Shields, in order to embark with the rest of the army for Flanders. I had now been three years and a half in the army. We were eight days on our passage, and landed at Ostend, in spring, 1743. Thence we marched to Ghent, where we were joined by three regiments more, to guard the king's baggage and the army's clothing. This was a long and fatiguing march, as well as a dangerous one. We had above four hundred waggons, with other carriages, and several pieces of cannon, under our care; and expected every day to be attacked by a part of the French army. So that we were obliged constantly to march in order of battle, and had no settled camp, till we came to the grand army, a few days after the battle of Dettingen.

We then marched to the camp at Worms. There orders were read at the head of every regiment, that no soldier must be seen above a mile from the camp, upon pain of death; which was to be executed immediately, without the form of a court-martial. But this did not at all deter me. Although my life was in continual danger, I went on in the same course all the campaign, neither fearing God, nor regarding man. One night in particular, as soon as we had pitched our tents, I set out, with some of my comrades, to a little town which lay on the left of the camp. I was busy in drinking, when the captain with a guard of horse was coming to take us up, being appointed to seize upon all who were found out of the lines, and to hang up the first man without delay. I looked back, and saw the captain and his guard, who had shut all the gates. But I ran to the great gate, wherein was a wicket-door, which was only upon the latch. I slipped through,

and before the gate could be opened for horsemen to follow me, I ran some distance from the town, and hid myself among the vines. There I lay till they were passed, and then got into the camp, just as the roll was calling.

After several marches, we came, toward the close of the year, to the camp near Spires. Before this, many grievous complaints had been made of our soldiers plundering the country. To prevent this, it was again proclaimed at the head of every regiment, that the captain with his guard would be out every night, and had express orders immediately to hang up the first man that he took. I was close to the officer who read this; and, to show how little we regarded it, as soon as he was gone to his tent, I and ten more of our regiment set out to plunder. We went to a village about two miles from the camp, to search for money, but could find none: however, we saw four bullocks, which we drove away before us. One of our officers met me, and asked whose they were. I told him they were some that we had bought: he said, "Very well," and went away. We sold three of them, and killed the other. The next day the poor people came to the camp, and found the three which we had sold. They made their complaint to the commanding-officer, who immediately gave orders to apprehend us. But that very morning I had been sent to some distance from the camp on an out-party: so the good providence of God, though I knew Him not, once more preserved me from a shameful death.

Orders now came for our marching into Flanders, in which long march nothing material happened. The English army quartered in Bruges and Ghent: our regiment was in Ghent; where we had cold

lodgings, little fire, and hard duty. I lay here three months, still continuing in my ignorance and rebellion against God. Meantime I had many sorrowful letters from my dear mother, with frequent little supplies of money. All the next summer we lay quite inactive, only plundering all the country. When I look back on those times, I know not which to admire most, God's goodness or my own wickedness: to complete which, I was now engaged with a Negro-man's wife, who was passionately fond of me. But what is too hard for God? I was now about twenty-five years old; and had never yet once said, with any real desire, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" But better days were at hand. The manner of God's bringing me out of the horrible pit I am next to relate.

After several marches, we came to another camp, where we lay nine or ten weeks. There was one in the same company with me, whose experience was a direct contrast to mine. His name was Mark Bond. He was born at Barnard-Castle, in the county of Durham. For many years I was wholly without God in the world; but he feared God from three years old, and was under great concern for his soul, and many times prayed to God in secret. When his parents sometimes put him to bed without saying his prayers, as soon as they were gone, he would rise and say them: otherwise he could not sleep. From this time, till he was seven years old, he was harassed with various temptations; but with one above all: he was violently and continually importuned to curse God, till one day, when he was about seven years of age, he went into the fields, under a hedge, and actually did it. The moment he had uttered the words, he was in great horror and distress of soul:

he then thought, God would no more have mercy, and that there was no salvation for him. Nevertheless he was, by the fear of God, restrained from outward sin. From that time till he was about eighteen, the sorrows of his heart were enlarged. He concluded he must go to hell, and had no Christian friend to advise with. O, what need have we to bless God for those helps he was destitute of! He durst not, however, put an end to his own life; but, a recruiting party being in the town, he entered into the army, desiring and hoping that he should soon be killed. Upon this principle he listed in the company I was in; but his ways were not like those of other men. Out of his little pay he saved money to send to his friends. We could never get him to drink with us; but he was always full of sorrow; he read much, and was much in private prayer.

At the beginning of the campaign, he went to hear the preaching of John Haime, William Clements, and John Evans. There he found what he wanted. God soon spake peace to his soul, and he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. He then began to think, whom he should open his mind to. He thought of several; but could fix on none but me. He could not shake me off his mind, till he came to me and told me what God had done for his soul, adding, how desperate my case would be, if I died without experiencing the same. But all of this was strange language to me. I understood it not; and as soon as he was gone, I used to go to her I mentioned before, and make sport of all he had said. He came to me after, but I would not hear him. He then endeavoured to turn his thoughts on some one else; but I was continually on his mind, sleeping and waking. He could not rest, either day or

night, but it was on his mind, "Go to Sampson." He came to me, and told me what he had felt and suffered on my account. But I did not mind it, till he met me one time, when I was in distress, having neither food, money, nor credit. On his coming and asking me to go and hear the preaching, I said, "You had better give me something to eat or drink; for I am both hungry and dry." He took me to a sutler's, and gave me both meat and drink. Then he took me by the hand, and led me to a place erected about half a mile from the camp. I had no desire to hear anything of religion, but on the contrary went with great reluctance. Who it was that was speaking I do not know; but this I know, that God spake to my heart. In a few minutes I was in deep distress, full of sorrow, under a deep sense of sin and danger, but mixed with a desire of mercy. And now, I that never prayed in my life was continually calling upon God: in time past, I could shed tears for nothing; but now the rock was rent; a fountain was opened, and tears of contrition ran plentifully down my cheeks. A cry after God was put into my heart, which has never yet ceased, and, I trust, never will. My dear companion observed it with great joy. I was as it were knocked down like an ox. I had nothing to plead, having never had either the power or the form of godliness. No works, no righteousness was mine. I could only say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

From that hour, as much addicted to it as I was before, I never swore an oath; and I was never more overcome by liquor, though I had been so enslaved to it for several years. Indeed there was a constant cry in my inmost soul, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" When the preaching was over, my dear companion

took me in his arms, blessed God with a joyful heart, and said, he would come the next night, and fetch me to the preaching. I went to my tent full of sorrow, thoroughly convinced what a miserable state I was in, and seeing all my sins stand in battle-array against me. All the next day I was longing for the time of hearing preaching and seeing my dear companion. But I had not patience to stay so long. I went to the place, some time before they began. There were several soldiers of other regiments come before me. Some were reading; others conversing of the things of God. Some at a little distance were singing; and some down in a corner were at prayer. I was walking about, my heart full of sorrow, my eyes full of tears, wishing I could pour out my heart to God like them, when one came to me, and kindly asked me, if I came to preaching, and how long I had done so. I answered, "Last night was the first time." He took me aside, and said, "Let us go to prayer." I said, "I cannot pray; I never prayed in my life." But he went to prayer with me. By this time my dear friend was come, and rejoiced to find that I was there before him. The more I heard, the more deeply was I convinced of sin, and of my danger on account of it. He asked, if I had a Bible or any good book. I said, "No; I knew not that ever I had read any." He said, "I have a piece of an old Bible; take it. I can do better without it than you." I took it as a great treasure, and read in it with great joy. The next day my old companions found me out, and called me many names. But it made no impression upon me at all, as I was every day more and more resolved to save my soul. I spent more and more time in reading and prayer, and missed no opportunity of

hearing the word. I was deaf to all the allurements of my comrades, regarding neither their evil nor their good words. I had now a tender conscience; I could neither drink, swear, game, nor plunder any more. I would not take so much as an apple, a bunch of grapes, nor anything that was not my own.

My companion, who had been employed for some time in an out-party, now came home to the company. He immediately took me to be with him as his comrade, and watched over me, as a tender parent over a beloved child. He inquired into all my affairs; and, finding I had contracted some debts, said, "The followers of Christ must be first just, and then charitable. We will put both our pays together, and live as hard as we can; and what we spare will pay the debt." From this time, I continued, by the grace of God, seeking Him with my whole heart.

Many trials I had, partly from my old companions, partly from the sins I was before given to. But, glory be to God! I was preserved from both, and enabled to persevere in the way of duty. My companion took every step he could to help me forward in the ways of God. Nevertheless all this campaign I was in great distress of soul; yet I hated sin, and followed God, though I knew He was angry with me. The more I heard, and the more I read the word, the greater was my pain; for I saw more clearly my miserable state, both by nature and by practice. All the remainder of the campaign I was in deep distress, having sometimes a little hope, sometimes none. But still I was convinced, the way of duty was the only way of safety.

The work of God now greatly increased among us.

And indeed the change which God wrought upon me gave a great alarm, not only in our company, but through the whole regiment. My dear companion and I began to reprove sinners, to invite them to hear the preaching, and to exhort as many as would hear to turn to God and flee from the wrath to come. And it pleased God to bless our weak endeavours, so that before the end of the campaign we had ten in the regiment I was in, who were closely united together, and were joined in such love for one another that we had in effect all things in common. And, thanks be to God, the flame spread through all the camp, so that we had a large number of hearers, and more and more were continually added to the society. I still went on my way sorrowing, but bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. When the camp broke up, we marched for winter-quarters, part to Ghent, and part to Bruges. I was afraid we should be left without a preacher; but God took care of this also. For as the army was divided, so were the preachers. John Haime and John Evans lay at Bruges, and William Clements at Ghent, where our regiment was. I rejoiced much at hearing this; although it could not take away the load of guilt which pressed down my soul.

As soon as our regiment was settled at Ghent, we hired two rooms: one for preaching, and one for private meetings; for, when off duty, we met twice a day. Here my sorrows increased. It was strongly suggested to me, that my day of grace was past, that I had sinned the unpardonable sin, and it signified nothing to strive any longer. O, what distress my poor soul was in! I thought the very stones in the street, and the timber in the wall, cried out against me for my enormous wickedness. I felt that

truth, "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear?"

I told all my troubles to my dear companion, who truly sympathized with me; but told me, I should not be thus long, for the time of my deliverance was at hand.

Yet I went on in the same state, having little hope of mercy, till one day I was ordered on duty at one of the out-posts. I was in deep distress, which my companion observed, and, when he parted from me, said, "I hope you will have better news to tell me when you see me again." When I came to the guard-house, I longed to be alone, that I might pour out my soul before God. I thought myself the most miserable creature on earth, far beneath the brute and inanimate creatures; all of which answered the end of their creation, which I had never done! From twelve at night till two it was my turn to stand sentinel at a dangerous post. I had a fellow-sentinel; but I desired him to go away, which he willingly did. As soon as I was alone, I kneeled down, and determined not to rise, but to continue crying and wrestling with God, till He had mercy on me. How long I was in that agony I cannot tell; but as I looked up to heaven, I saw the clouds open exceeding bright, and I saw Jesus hanging on the cross. At the same moment these words were applied to my heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." My chains fell off; my heart was free. All guilt was gone, and my soul was filled with unutterable peace. I loved God and all mankind, and the fear of death and hell was vanished away. I was filled with wonder and astonishment. I then closed my eyes; but the impression was still the same. And for about ten weeks, while I was awake, let me be where I would,

the same appearance was still before my eyes, and the same impression upon my heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

The corporal came at two o'clock to relieve the sentries, but I could not think the time was half gone. When I came into the guard-house, I was full of matter, and longed to tell what God had done for my soul. But I did not dare to cast pearls before swine. I longed for my dear companion, that we might rejoice together. As soon as the time for relieving the guard came, I hastened to the room where I lay. As I was going my companion was looking for me, and, before I could speak, said, "I know God has set your soul at liberty; I see it in your countenance." I then told him all. And after we had taken some refreshment, we went to our little company, and concluded the day in prayer and praise, magnifying God for all His mighty works.

During our stay in Ghent, we met twice or thrice a day, either for preaching, prayer, or to tell our experience to each other. And God increased our number every day, so that we had now some in almost every regiment. I was still happy; but found a strong desire to be more holy, that I might be more happy. And from this time, rev. and dear sir, I found my heart united to you, and to the people that were under your care, of whom brother Clements was often speaking; and I truly loved them whom I had not seen. Indeed I considered myself as a member of the same body, and longed greatly to see them.

About this time I began to think of my parents and family. My dear mother had, from time to time, sent me little supplies, either in money, or

such other things as she knew I wanted. I now sent her a long letter, asking pardon of my father and her for all my past disobedience, and telling them that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. I thanked her for what she had done for me; but desired she would not send anything more, as I knew it must straiten her, and I had now learned to "be content with my wages." This letter they could not at all understand, and it was handed about from one to another, till it came to one Mr. Wadsworth, a Dissenting minister, who, having known what manner of life I led before, could not in any wise believe it. However, he wrote me a friendly letter, and sent me a Bible, which was more welcome to me than gold; as was a Common Prayer-book, which my mother sent me. A few days after, my letter came into the hands of Mr. John Wilson, who was then one of the chief persons in your society, and much alive to God. He sent me a comfortable letter, and a hymn-book, which much refreshed my soul. About this time you sent some books over, which were of great service to us.

On March 26th, 1745, the French, taking the field before us, opened their camp with seventy-six thousand men, and above a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. We were then ordered to march out of our quarters; but before we could come up, they had laid siege to Tournay, and had intrenched themselves up to the very chin. After several little movements, we were all assembled on the 19th of April, under the Duke of Cumberland, being in all, besides the train of artillery, forty-six thousand men.

By this time, having given way to unprofitable reasoning, I lost my rapturous joy, and a kind of

heaviness followed ; but, blessed be God, the evidence of my acceptance was not interrupted.

We then drew so near the French, that we could hear their evening and morning gun. But between us and them there was a wood, which we were obliged to cut a way through. All the pioneers were employed in this. On the 28th I was ordered to go and guard some baggage ; but on the 29th, early in the morning, the corporal brought me word, " You must go into the ranks ; for before to-morrow night we shall have a battle." When I came into the ranks, I felt some fear : but as we came near the French army, we halted a little. I then stepped out of the line, threw myself on the ground, and prayed that God would deliver me from all fear, and enable me to behave as a Christian and good soldier. Glory be to God, He heard my cry, and took away all my fear. I came into the ranks again, and had both peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. By this time night came on. We were ordered to lie on our arms. Toward morning, part of the army marched through the pass which we had cut through the wood. My dear companion and I had sweet communion together, having constant and strong confidence in God. As soon as the dawn of the day appeared, we were ordered to advance. The column on the right had passed through. I was in the second column. But all the road was made almost impassable, which broke the head of our column. And in the mean time, the French batteries, playing upon us, did us much hurt. We wheeled off, in order to get into the plains of Fontenoy. I had not marched far before we met a horse without his rider, and the lower part of his head taken off by a cannon-ball. A little after, I saw one of the guards lie dead ; and soon after, many

more. We still advanced, and drew up in line of battle, in the plain of Fontenoy. The French before us were intrenched up to the neck, and many batteries of cannon were playing upon us. I was in the front rank, and the left-hand man joining the Dutch. We stood there, till the Dutch turned their backs and marched away. I was then left exposed to a battery on the left, and the batteries and small arms in the front. Soon after our regiment, with some others, were ordered to advance and attack the French in their trenches. We marched up boldly ; but when we came close to the town of Fontenoy, we observed a large battery ready to be opened on us. And the cannon were loaded with small bullets, nails, and pieces of old iron. We had orders to lie down on the ground ; but, for all that, many were wounded, and some killed. Presently after the discharge we rose up, and marched to the first trench, still keeping up our fire. They gave way ; but when we entered, batteries in the flanks were opened, which tore our regiment so, that we were obliged to fall back into the rear. Yet we rallied, and renewed the attack. But it was to no purpose. All the day I was in great spirits, and as composed in my mind, as if I had been hearing a sermon. I neither desired life nor death, but was entirely happy in God. Night coming on, the retreat was beaten, and the whole army marched away, leaving our cannon, and sick, and wounded behind us. The profane sinners now received reproof, and promised to become new men ; and though most of them soon forgot their resolutions, yet in some there was a lasting change.

As soon as I had opportunity to speak to my dear companion, he told me, it had been a happy day to him. He had received two musket-balls : but one

struck him on the right thigh, and hit on two seven-penny pieces that were in his pocket; (they are of a mixed metal, about the size of half a crown;) it appeared to him, as if he had received a blow with a stick. The other struck him on his left side-pocket, upon a clasped knife, and bent the blade, and loosened it in the handle. So that we may well say,

“Go and return secure from death,
Till God command thee home.”

I had eaten nothing that day but a little brown bread, and drank only a little water. But I was very thankful, as if I had received it immediately from the hands of God.

We marched all that night and the next day, and more and more of our scattered army overtook us; but many lay down on the ground, and could go no farther. Glory be to God! He gave me constant peace, and strength to keep with the main body, being always one of the first, till we encamped at Lessines. We then began to inquire, who of our society was gone home. We missed many out of our regiment. One was saying, “O, how happy I am!” and, just as he spoke, a cannon-shot came and took off his head. We lost four preachers, and many of the society. But my dear companion, with the other brethren in the regiment, were still as the heart of one man. Such was the religion of the soldiers at this time, before any of them were corrupted by new opinions! I then thought, “This state of life is the only one to love and serve God in: I would not change it for any other under the sun, upon any consideration whatever.” How did this sweeten all the fatigues, and hardships, and dangers I had to go through! Glory be to God! I rejoiced

in them all. Meantime I was continually exhorting sinners to repent. And they would bear it now, as the French were so near us, and we knew not how soon they would fall upon us. The whole army was drawn up in order of battle, expecting to be attacked by them every day. But, instead of this, they pushed forward, and took Ghent, and afterwards all Flanders, as far as Ostend.

About this time the lieutenant and paymaster of our regiment sent for me, and said, "My servant was killed at Fontenoy, and I intend to take you in his place." As he had always been particularly kind to me, I knew not what to do. It was not a command, but a favour offered, which he left to my choice. I earnestly prayed to God for direction. I then returned him my sincerest thanks for his kind offer, but said, I could not accept it. He looked earnestly at me, and said, "Pray what are your reasons for refusing it?" I answered, "Sir, the first is, I could not have time to attend preaching, and meet with my Christian friends; the second, I should be obliged to do on the Lord's day what would give me great pain, and displease God." He replied, "I like you the better for being so honest. Go your way. I will be your friend."

A short time after, there came an order for ten men out of our regiment to go to the train, and learn the exercise of the great guns, to supply the place of those that were killed at Fontenoy; but active, sober men, and such as could be depended on. The corporal came and said, "Get yourself ready; for you must leave the regiment, and go to the artillery." I was sorry to leave my brethren, but could not in conscience disobey a lawful command. My brethren also were sorry; but we encouraged

each other, that we should not be far from one another. So we prayed and parted. My pay was now near double to what it was before. And I had two of the society with me, brothers Hammond and Hodges; both much alive to God. I was kept in constant peace, athirst for God, and longing for more of His image. As often as I could, I went to see my dear brethren; and we always prayed and praised God together. And even the rest of the company were glad to see me; for I have frequently remarked, there is a kind of affection in the army toward one another, which is hardly to be found elsewhere.

I had not been many weeks in my new employ, when we heard there was a rising in Scotland, and that the rebels had defeated the king's army at Preston Pans, near Edinburgh. And orders came that the greatest part of the English army should march directly for England. I was sent back to my own regiment. We made forced marches, and, the transports being ready at Helvoetsluys, we soon came within sight of land. In all these movements I found no decay of inward life. I knew it was my duty to obey my superiors, and God made it my pleasure. He was always before me in every place; and I could boldly testify,

"Thy presence makes my paradise,
And where Thou art is heaven."

Our regiment and two more landed at Gravesend, when we marched on, and encamped at Deptford-heath, in the latter end of October, 1745. The next Lord's day we of the society went to Bexley church. We lay at Bexley three or four weeks, and constantly attended on Mr. Piers's ministry; and there we

received a larger account of you. O, how did I then long to see you! Thence we marched to Deptford. When we were drawn up there in the Broadway, William Giles came and invited us to his house, where we spent the evening in singing and prayer, and my soul was much refreshed. My mind was still kept in perfect peace. It was nothing to me where I was, at home or abroad, in the field or in the church, marching or sitting in the closet. We made long marches from hence, hearing that the rebels were marching swiftly southward. Wherever we were, I inquired if there were any Methodists, that we might sing and pray together. The army was assembled when we came to Stafford; and we were ordered to be ready at a minute's warning. We had not been here many hours, when at ten o'clock, in a cold frosty night, about the middle of December, the drum beat to arms. We were drawn up in order of battle, and marched on, our spies informing us that in two hours we should meet the rebels. We had then orders to load our pieces, and to be ready at the word of command.

We marched on, and the morning came on. The rebels, now hearing of us, turned off for the Derby road, thinking, it seems, to pass us and get to London. By this time we had got to Stone, where we learned they were returning northward. On this the main army was ordered to pursue them, and some regiments to march back to London, lest they should give us the slip. Our regiment was one of these. We were to lie in the towns and villages near London. I had a great desire to lie at Greenwich or Deptford. We made long marches; and when we were near London, orders came, that our regiment should be quartered at Greenwich and Deptford. I

was glad, though I knew not why ; for I had no knowledge either of the place or the people. On Christmas-eve we came to the place ; and I was quartered in the next public-house, which is the very house where I now live.

On Christmas-day we went to church, and spent the evening at brother Giles's, in singing and prayer. We lay here till April, 1746, but had orders not to go above a mile from our quarters. Hearing these orders read, I went to the commanding-officer, who said, " Well, Sampson, what do you want ? " I said, " Leave, sir, if you please, for two or three of us to go to London twice or thrice a week. " He said, " For what ? " I answered, " To hear preaching. " " What, " said he, " cannot you go to church ? " I said, " Yes, sir ; and I count it both my duty and privilege so to do. But I am much united in affection to the Rev. Mr. Wesley ; and I want to see and hear him, and to be joined with him and his people. " He looked at me, and said, " Well, thou art the same honest man as before. " He immediately wrote an order for me and one or two more to pass to and from London as often as we pleased. He added, that he knew Mr. Wesley, and was glad I had made so good a choice. When not on duty, we likewise met twice a day in the old room at Deptford, to read the Scriptures, and to pray and praise God. At this time I had no thought of preaching, though my dear companion often told me, God would call me to it before I died.

Twice a week, during our stay at Deptford, I went to the Foundry, or West-street chapel, where I was always profited by your preaching. Here I became acquainted with her that is now my wife. After much consideration and prayer, I mentioned the

subject of marriage to her. After a little while she answered, "If I was out of the army, and in some way of business, she had no objection." So here it rested for the present.

One day one of the society desired me to go to Eltham with a message. As soon as I came thither, (it being three miles from our quarters,) a sergeant and two soldiers seized me as a deserter. They brought me back as such to Greenwich, and carried me before the commanding-officer. I told him the real case. He asked them, "Had you any passport?" On their answering, "No," he said, "Make haste home, or I will order you to the guard-house." He then smiled upon me, and said, "Go to your companions."

One night, as we were coming from the Foundry, a soldier met me and said, "Make haste home; for early in the morning you are to march for Canterbury and Dover." I was a little struck, and did not find my mind so passive in all things as it used to be. When I came to Deptford, I found the orders were come. We spent great part of the night in prayer and praise, and early on April 22d, with many tears, left our dear friends at Deptford.

Before we set out, my dear companion was fully persuaded that I should get out of the army. But he prayed that he might not live to see it. And he believed God would grant his request.

We stayed awhile at Canterbury, and met twice a day; but there was then no society there. Thence we marched to Dover Castle. Here I received a letter from Deptford, informing me that my dear friend would be glad to see me once more. Having procured a furlough for fourteen days, I set out on May 28th, about four in the afternoon, and, not

stopping, reached Deptford (sixty-seven miles) about four the next day. On the 12th of June (my permit being then out) I was married. The same day a letter from my officer informed me, that our regiment was embarking for Holland, and I must come immediately. So I took leave of my wife and friends on my wedding-day, and set out without delay. The next day we began our march to Gravesend, where the transports lay. We embarked on the 20th of June, with a fair wind. But when we were within sight of land, the ship wherein I was stuck fast upon the sand-bank: we lay rolling about, every moment expecting the ship to break. Many of the soldiers cried to God for mercy: our little company, seizing the opportunity, exhorted them to forsake sin, and turn to God; which they promised to do, if He would please to spare them. All this time my soul was truly happy. I had peace with God, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

While preparation was making to save as many as possible, when the ship should sink, she gave a spring, and got off the bank; and in a few hours we came safe to Williamstadt. We marched immediately to camp, (it being the latter end of June,) being commanded by Prince Charles of Lorraine. In a few days we came within sight of the French army. My wife had desired me to apply for my discharge. But I thought this was not the proper time, as we expected a battle every day, lest I should seem afraid to fight, and so bring a scandal upon the Gospel.

But we found those of our society that had been in Scotland had lost their simplicity, and zeal for God; and, instead of that, spent all their time in disputing about this and the other doctrine. But

blessed be God ! He kept all in our regiment of one heart and of one mind. We were almost always in sight of the French, they watching our motions, and we theirs. Meantime provisions were both scarce and dear ; but I did not now dare to plunder. We marched through orchards and vineyards, where there was plenty of fruit, which I knew would be taken away in a few hours. But as faint as I was, I durst not touch it, because it was not my own.

All this campaign I had a solid dependence on God, and a thankful remembrance of all His mercies. And everything which I had I received as from the immediate hand of God. One day, as we were marching, the bread-waggons did not reach us in time ; and we were in great want of bread and of all provisions, while, being on our march in sight of the enemy, we expected a battle every hour. We wanted water likewise ; and here we saw the difference between them that feared God, and them that did not. The latter cursed the king, and blasphemed God. And how did they groan and fret under their hardships ! On the contrary, the former could cheerfully say, "The will of the Lord be done." My soul was more than usually happy, rejoicing in God my Saviour. I felt much love and pity to my poor fellow-soldiers, and exhorted them to turn to God, and then they would find themselves happy under every trying circumstance.

As I was marching in the ranks, I felt hunger bite hard, but had not a murmuring thought. I lifted up my heart to God, and knew He could supply all my wants. I had not gone far, before I found a piece of brown bread, which I picked up, and received as out of the hand of God. We had but little rest : we kept Maestricht in our rear, as a place of retreat,

if needed. And all our provisions came that way. This the French knew, and laboured to cut off our communication with it. The season began to be cold, and the two armies were so near together, that whichever retreated first would be sure to suffer greatly. The French began to cut off our supplies. Prince Charles, observing this, thought it high time to prepare for a retreat into our winter-quarters. So he ordered that a strong party should advance in front of the army, to keep the French in play, and make them believe he intended a general action. This consisted of two English regiments, whereof ours was one, with some Hanoverians and some Dutch, making in the whole about twelve thousand men. On September 30th we had orders to hold ourselves in readiness, and after gun-firing to leave our tents standing, and march silently about a mile in the front of the camp. Prince Charles ordered our commander to go to such a distance and fortify his men ; and to keep his post till further orders, or till he could keep it no longer.

We all thought the army was to cover us, in order to bring on a general engagement. But they were ordered to retreat, with our cannon and baggage, to the other side of the town. This was done by two o'clock the next day. We advanced according to order, after my companion had given me to understand that we were to be parted that day. As soon as we came to the place appointed, we were drawn up in line of battle. We English posted ourselves in some gardens and orchards, which were some little cover. At day-break the whole French army advanced in seven or eight columns, all covered with horse on the right and left. They advanced slowly, while the Queen of Hungary's light-horse and theirs

skirmished between us and them. Here we lay, waiting for orders to retreat to our army. But the prince forgot to send them, being busy with his cups and his ladies. So our brave general kept the field all day, in spite of the whole French army. I bless God I found no fear, but constant peace, and my spirit rejoiced in God. While we lay on our arms, I had both time and opportunity to reprove the wicked. And they would bear it now, and made great promises, if God should spare them, of becoming new men. By this time the French came very near us, and a cannon-ball came straight up our rank. But, as we were lying upon the ground, it went over our heads. We then had orders to stand up and fire. The right of the French being closely engaged with the Dutch, the French centre advanced, and fired on us and the other English regiment. The rest of the French inclined to the right of us, in order to get round us. They quickly took our two pieces of cannon, and immediately turned them upon us. We were then ordered to retire with all speed into the plain, where we expected to find our own army. But they were far enough off, their general taking no thought for us.

All this time I found a constant waiting upon God. All fear was removed. I had no tremor on my spirits, and the presence of God was with me all the day long. My dear companion was on my right hand, and had been all the night. As we were both in the front rank, a musket-ball came and went through his leg. He fell down at my feet, looked up in my face with a smile, and said, "My dear, I am wounded." I and another took him in our arms, and carried him out of the ranks, while he was exhorting me to stand fast in the Lord. We laid

him down, took our leave of him, and fell into our ranks again. In our farther retreat, I again met with my dear friend, who had received another ball through his thigh. But his heart was full of love, and his eyes full of heaven. I may justly say, "Here fell a great Christian, a good soldier, a faithful friend." I was obliged to leave him; for the French pressed hard upon us. Yet I was enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." I trust I have seen many that were perfected in love; but none so full of it as my dear companion. He was always cheerful, but never light; always in prayer, but a man of few words. Not a thoughtless look or an idle word could be observed in him. Even to this day, when I think of him, it is both with pleasure and profit.

Night came on, but, the French still pressing upon us, we retreated all night, till we came near Maestricht. It rained very hard, being the 30th of September, and was exceedingly cold. Toward morning, being out of the reach of the French, we had orders to halt. We had no tents, and it continued raining: however, being well tired, I lay down on the wet ground, put my knapsack under my head, and soon fell fast asleep. In the morning we had orders to march and join the grand army. The small remains of those whose lives had been so vilely thrown away did so without delay.

But now I began to miss my companion. It seemed as if I had lost part of myself. I could have wished, that I had died by his side; but I found I must look up, or I should sink into deep waters. I cried unto God, and He heard my prayer, and turned my heaviness into joy. After a few days, we marched to our

winter-quarters, which were at Bois-le-duc, in Holland. About this time I received letters from my wife, begging me to apply for my discharge, and she would send whatever money was wanting. I made this a matter of earnest prayer, and, after several steps, procured a promise from our colonel to discharge me for fifteen guineas. I wrote to my wife, and she sent a note, which was readily accepted. But in the mean time Colonel Philips sold his commission. Our new colonel consented to discharge me for the same sum, on condition I would be his servant till we came to England. But just at that time I fell ill of a fever, and orders came for our regiment to be clothed, and to take the field. But no clothing came for me, and my arms were taken from me. I was still very ill, when the colonel told me he would set out for England in a few weeks: "And if you are not able to go, I must leave you behind me." This threw me into much heaviness; but I cried to the Lord, and He soon turned it into joy. The fever instantly left me, and, by the time appointed, I was able to attend on the colonel. My brethren and I spent great part of the night in commending each other to God. I attended the colonel to Helvoetsluys, went on board the packet, and landed at Harwich in eight-and-forty hours; and on February 22d, 1748, found my wife and all my friends well at Deptford.

About this time, John Hyatt and I, with two more, being one night met together at the preaching-room, one Richardson, a sailor, who once ran well, but had for some time turned back to folly, earnestly desired to meet with us. The more we prayed for him, the more his sorrows increased; till his cries were so loud, they almost drowned our

voices. After the rest, I began to pray a second time. He fell back, and began beating himself against the floor, so that we could hardly hold him down. I prayed on. Suddenly he gave a spring out of our hands, jumped up, clasped his hands, and cried out, "He is come! He is come! Jesus is mine! My soul is happy!" By this many of the neighbours burst in, thinking we were killing one another. He went home rejoicing in the Lord, and in two or three days went to sea. But we never heard of him since. So I trust he is gone to paradise.

In the midst of much outward reproach, I now felt many inward conflicts. I found the remains of inward corruption, and earnestly longed to be delivered from them. So much the more were evil reports spread, even by good men, who followed not with us; and I always observed, the more devoted to God we were, the more did the enemy rage.

The disturbances at the time of preaching were now so great, that I was obliged to apply to a magistrate. But after a few of the rioters were taken up, we had peace, and our congregation increased. I then appointed a meeting on Thursday evenings, wherein I read part of one of your sermons. Some of your preachers likewise came down from London, and the congregations increased so that the room could not contain them. I consulted you. You advised me to get a piece of ground, and build. I immediately opened a subscription, and having procured ground, desired three builders to give in their proposals. This was in the year 1757. As soon as the building was finished, (which, with the galleries, cost two hundred and twenty-five pounds,) I paid the master-builder what I could, and offered him a

note for the rest. He said, "No; your word is sufficient." I was also in debt to my mealmen; yet I durst not withhold my hand from the cause of God and the poor, though I stood alone, not having one to help, or stand engaged with me.

It was about six years before I could discharge this debt: I then gave up the lease to you. I had for some time had thoughts of preaching, but they were now stronger than ever. So I gave now and then a few words of exhortation; and I was so engaged herein, I could not retreat. Whenever I thought of desisting, I was unhappy. I then made it matter of earnest prayer, till I durst delay no longer; but, with much fear and trembling, undertook to preach on those nights when the preachers did not come, though my fear was so great, that it sometimes affected my body. For some time I preached at Deptford only; but on my signifying my desires to you, you accepted me, and gave me a little to do in town.

My time was now fully employed. I had my own business to mind, together with that of the society. I was preacher, steward, visiter of the sick, and leader of the bands and classes. Mean time I had many reproaches, both from others, and from our own people. But God blessed me in all these things, and gave me to see some fruit of my labour. For from time to time some were convinced of sin, and others justified. And, indeed, had it not been for this encouragement, I could not have continued to preach.

In the year 1760 both my labours and my trials increased. I was made one of the four constables of our parish; and on October 27th I was sent for to the bench to be sworn in. Many laughed, and

many gazed at me as a monster; but my soul was composed and happy in God. When they called me to take the oath, I told them, "I cannot in conscience." One from the bench cried out, "Fine him twenty pounds, and he will swear anything." I answered him, "No, sir, not for twenty worlds." After many more words, the chairman said, "Mr. Staniforth, shall I make an oath for you?" I said, "Sir, if you please." He then proposed the following, to which I had no objection:—"Sampson Staniforth, of the parish of Greenwich, is by us appointed to serve the office of constable for one year, in the best manner he can, according to his own way of thinking."

When we were dismissed, I gave my partners to understand that I should be punctual in the execution of my office. And one of them being a great swearer, I told him, "You must not swear before me, as I will make you pay for it." When the Quarter Sessions came on, the high-constable summoned all the constables in the hundred (four-and-twenty) to meet. When I came into the room, one and another cried out, "No swearing now!" After dinner they drank the king's health, which I drank; and a second, which I drank in water. The next man cried with a loud voice, "Here is Dr. Squintum's health." When it came to me I stopped, and he said, "What, Mr. Staniforth, will you not drink that health?" I answered, "I pray God to bless that good man, and give him health and length of days." I then left the room. And from that time they left me to do just as I would. This was a trying year; but God enabled me to give satisfaction to the parish, while I found His presence always with me, and my soul prospered much.

I was the next year overseer of the poor ; but I had three good partners, and passed through the year with great ease.

About this time I had a remarkable deliverance. There was a heavy brick building belonging to my house, and that of my neighbour. Just as I came out of it one day it fell down : had it been a minute sooner, I should have been buried in the ruins.

It was now that the great revival of the work of God began. Observing some wildfire mixed with that holy and heavenly flame, I endeavoured gently to check it both in public and private, exhorting all to keep close to the written word ; to hold fast whatever was agreeable to the Scriptures, and let all the rest go.

In the year 1764 I was sent for by Mr. M. to his house. The messenger told me he wanted to speak with me, and I must come immediately. When I came, I found the Grecian bishop with him, who ordained me and three more. But, finding it would offend my brethren, I have never availed myself of it to this hour.

God now gave me, what I had so long desired, to owe no man anything ; and I went on cheerfully, though not without many temptations, both within and without. But I still resolved to lay out myself and my substance for the cause of God and the good of souls. And He was still pleased to give me some tokens for good, both in preaching and visiting the sick.

There now came into our neighbourhood one Mr. B., a Dissenting minister, a man of strong sense and great learning. He applied to me to serve him with bread. He was open and free in his conversation, but of a warm-temper. He often called upon

me, and we commonly got into dispute, particularly about original sin and justification, in which I always found great freedom of speech and enlargement of heart. One night he stayed to supper; and as he declined it, I asked a blessing, concluding as usual with "for the sake of Jesus Christ." Observing he smiled, I said after supper, "Sir, is it not for His sake that we receive every blessing?" This introduced a warm dispute, till he rose up in a great rage, and, striking his hand upon the table, said, "I expect no more benefit from the blood of Christ, than from the blood of a bull." From this time we did not converse together, till he fell sick, and was visited by Mr. Dornford. He asked him whether he knew Mr. Staniforth, and begged he would send me to him. Mr. Dornford told me; but before he spoke, a letter came, desiring me to come immediately. He received me with great kindness. I spoke to him of the nature and necessity of repentance, and showed it was needful to feel our original corruption, as well as our actual sins. While I was speaking, the tears ran down his cheeks, and my soul was much drawn out to God for him. I asked, "Shall I go to prayer?" He said, "By all means; and may God hear your prayer!" Afterwards he said, "Dear Mr. Staniforth, my time is short: be with me as much as you can." This was Thursday. On Friday I went again, both morning and afternoon. I spoke closely to him, and repeated what he said at my house. He said, "I thank God and you that I see my error. O, pray for me!" On Saturday likewise I was with him twice; and he felt more and more the need of a Saviour. I then said, "Christ must be equal with the Father, or He cannot atone for our sins." He answered, "He is; and I believe

He is able to save all that come to God through Him." We then prayed to Him with joy and confidence, and praised God together. On Sunday I was with him twice. The second time (which was about eight in the evening) he said, he should live but a few hours. I asked, "What is the ground of your hope of heaven?" He replied, "The mercy of God through the merits of my dear Redeemer; and my soul is happy in Him." I said, "Then your sentiments are greatly changed." He said, "Yes; blessed be God for His grace, and you as His instrument. I now know there is no way of salvation but through Jesus Christ." He kissed my hand, and about eight hours after gave up his soul to God.

I now began to be more employed in and about London. Every Sunday morning I walked thither to meet the preachers, and to know my appointments. I had six miles to walk all weathers; and in the winter, to go and come in the dark, as I was always in town at eight in the morning, and took care to be at every place where I was appointed. And I had many sweet hours of communion with God as I walked by the way. I made it a rule, from the beginning to this day, to bear my own expenses. This cost me ten or twelve pounds a year; and I bless God I can bear it. Beside meeting the class and band, and visiting the sick, I preach five or six times in the week. And the Lord gives me to rejoice, in that I can still say, "These hands have ministered to my necessities."

In the year 1771 we began preaching at Rotherhithe. I went in my turn, and found my heart much united to the people. So was theirs to me. The place we preached in being both dear and

inconvenient, they thought of building, and applied to me concerning it. I laid the case before you. You encouraged me to go on; and said you could not do much, but you would help me as far as you could. I took a piece of ground, and set the workmen about the building, which cost in all near two hundred pounds. For this I alone stood engaged. I lent upwards of a hundred pounds, and was near eight years before I could get the building entirely out of debt. I still constantly preach there once a week, and every first Sunday in the month. I soon saw some fruit of my labours here also. W. C. being convinced of sin, and under the afflicting hand of God, I desired our friends, both at Rotherhithe and Deptford, to set apart a day of prayer on his behalf. God heard the prayer, restored him to his right mind, and filled his heart with love. About the same time, Samuel Gibbs was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. He was afterwards settled at Snowsfields, and became eminently useful. He died happy in January, 1781, and I preached his funeral sermon.

I was still frequently tempted to leave off preaching; but generally when the temptation was strongest, I was informed of another and another that had received a blessing. Glory be to God, who does not send us a warfare at our own cost! I was now likewise blessed in temporal things, having enough both to answer all demands, and, if I was called away, to leave a little to my wife, who has for many years laboured under a severe asthma, and been thereby cut off from all the public means of grace. For her sake I began to preach in my own house every Monday evening. And hereby I have reason to believe some good has been done to others also. Several of

my neighbours come to hear me, send for me when they are sick, and will do nothing in the way of charity without me.

About this time I had several invitations to leave the Connexion: one offered me forty pounds a year, another fifty; urging that I might hereby save myself much fatigue, as well as considerable expense. But whenever I thought closely upon the subject, three objections occurred. 1. It was clear God had blessed me in this way; therefore I was afraid to go out of it. 2. I saw how much hurt had been done in the society by these separations. And, 3, as to money or ease, my heart is not set on money, and I am not weary of my labour. So upon the coolest reflection I can still say, and that with full purpose of heart, "This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God."

What farther God has for me to do in His cause, and for the good of souls, I know not. But I trust He will enable me to be more thankful for every mercy, more faithful to grace given, and more fruitful in those few days which He may please to add to my life.

My present method is, I pray with my wife before I go out in the morning, and at breakfast time with my family and all that are in the house: the former part of the day I spend in my business; my spare hours in reading, and private exercises. Most evenings I preach; so that I am seldom at home before nine o'clock: but though I am so much out at nights, and generally alone, God keeps me both from evil men and evil spirits. And many times I am as fresh when I come in at night as I was when I went out in the morning. I conclude the day in reading the Scriptures, and in praying with my family.

I am now in the sixty-third year of my age; and, glory be to God! I am not weary of well-doing. I find my desires after God stronger than ever; my understanding is more clear in the things of God; and my heart is united more than ever, both to God and His people. I know their religion and mine is the gift of God through Christ, and the work of God by His Spirit. It is revealed in Scripture, and is received and retained by faith, in the use of all Gospel ordinances. It consists in an entire deadness to the world, and to our own will; and an entire devotedness of our souls, bodies, time, and substance to God through Christ Jesus. In other words, it is the loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, and all mankind for God's sake. This arises from a knowledge of His love to us: "We love Him because we know He first loved us;" a sense of which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us: from the little hereof that I have experienced, I know, he that experiences this religion is a happy man. Two verses in one of our hymns exactly describe what I now feel, and what I desire:—

"If so poor a worm as I
 May to Thy great glory live,
 All my actions sanctify,
 All my words and thoughts receive!
 Claim me, for Thy service, claim
 All I have, and all I am.

"Take my soul and body's powers,
 Take my memory, mind, and will,
 All my goods, and all my hours,
 All I know, and all I feel:
 All I think, and speak, and do:
 Take my heart,—but make it new!"

Thus, Rev. and dear Sir, I have given you a little sketch of God's dealings with me. May the Lord bless you with length of days and much happiness! So prays

Your much obliged son and servant
in the Gospel,

SAMPSON STANIFORTH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "METHODIST MAGAZINE."

LONDON, *April 3d*, 1799.

THE holy apostle exhorts us to hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end: hence we may safely conclude, that this is the will of the Lord concerning us. But all that are brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God are not so happy as to take the apostle's advice; and for this reason, some pious and prudent people have objected to the publishing any account of the Lord's gracious dealings with us, till we have finished our Christian warfare, lest we should dishonour our profession. Nevertheless we have abundant reason to praise the Lord that there are many who, from the time that they first tasted of the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come, till they finished their Christian race, continued steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And it is worthy our observation, that a great many whose lives have appeared in the "Methodist Magazine" have been of this number, and have joyfully testified with their dying breath, that God had followed them with mercy and loving-kindness all their days, and that they could then cheerfully give up themselves into His hand, firmly

believing that they should be happy with Him for ever.

As some account of the Lord's dealings with that good soldier and faithful servant of God, Mr. Sampson Staniforth, was published in the Magazine for 1783, it will afford your pious readers pleasure to hear, that he finished his course with joy.

After he gave up his business, he removed from Deptford to Shoreham, at the desire of the pious and venerable Mr. Perronet, where Mr. Staniforth was made very useful among the little flock in that place; but he returned to Deptford, to his old friends, a few years back, where he spent a great part of his time in visiting the sick and the poor, and such as were in distress. Those who were in want he relieved according to his ability. He was a man who for many years had the glory of God in view, and the salvation of souls very much at heart; and he spared no pains in gathering poor wandering sinners into the fold of Christ, and encouraging those who were brought in, to press forward towards the mark, that they might obtain the prize of their high calling. He was of a remarkably calm, mild temper, and of a peaceable and healing spirit; and was exceedingly useful in promoting peace and love among the people. He has long been a father to the Deptford society, as well as to some others in that neighbourhood.

When the infirmities of age came upon him, he bore them with entire resignation to the will of that God whose mercy and love in Christ Jesus he had long and so largely experienced. And when visited with affliction (which he frequently was for several years before his death) he possessed his soul in patience, and looked to the hour of his dissolution with joyful expectation of being for ever with the

Lord. He was neither molested with gloomy doubts, nor painful fears; nor was the enemy of souls permitted to distress him. But as his heart stood fast, believing in the Lord, so his evidence for heaven continued unclouded to the last moment of life. He said to a dear friend, a few days before his happy spirit took its flight, "I think my experience may be all summed up in these few words,—

' In the heavenly Lamb,
Thrice happy I am ;

And my heart it doth dance at the sound of His name.' "

The night before he died, a friend was sent for to wake with and attend upon him; who, when he came into his room, asked Mr. Staniforth how he was. He replied, "I am exceedingly ill, and I thought I was going home." He then repeated many particular passages from our hymns, and among the rest the following:—

" O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free !
A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely spilt for me ! "

And soon after,

" My God, I am Thine,
What a comfort Divine,
What a blessing, to know that my Jesus is mine ! "

And added, "O, what a mercy to have God to go to in a time of trouble!" Seeing his servant standing by, he said, "Seek the Lord while He may be found, and hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast to the end. The Lord bless you. May all the blessings which the Lord poured out upon the head of Joseph be poured out upon you!" and very soon after he calmly and quietly breathed his last.

Thus died Sampson Staniforth, who had steadily

walked with God for nearly sixty years. He preached the Gospel for almost fifty years, and finished his course in the seventy-ninth year of his age. The little property he had left, having no children, he gave by will to his relations. But it was remarked by many, that not one of his Christian friends was invited to his funeral: yet the preachers in town willingly attended him to the grave, though not invited; so did several of those who loved him from Deptford; and the society showed their affection for their deceased and faithful minister, by putting the whole chapel in mourning on the occasion. So exceedingly little do distant relations in general think themselves obliged to their deceased friends for anything they leave behind them. How much more commendable is it to dispose of our property at death for the honour of God, as He inclined us to do while living!

EXTEMPORE LINES

ON THE DEATH OF MR. SAMPSON STANIFORTH,
OF DEPTFORD.

SAMPSON, in youth—like the unbroken steed—
With British soldiers, rank'd in flaming red,
To Flanders march'd to meet the Gallic foe:—
'Twas there the youth first learn'd himself to know.
Back to his native country he returns;
A different flame now in his bosom burns.
Discharged from royal William's loyal band,
Enlists, in Jesu's nobler ranks to stand.
No changeling he;—firm in his Master's cause;
A Bible-Christian;—subject to its laws;
A soldier, husband, Christian, man of worth,
Such died the venerable STANIFORTH.

G. W.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS LEE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

June 1717

1. I WAS born in May, in the year 1727, at a small village in the parish of Keighley, Yorkshire. When I was four years old, my mother died, and I was removed to her brother's, at Long-Addingham. Here I was carefully restrained from outward sin : yet I often felt an inclination to it ; particularly to swear, which one day I did : but, blessed be God, He struck me with so deep a conviction, that I never swore again from that day, nor had the least inclination to it. About fourteen, I was bound apprentice to one of the worsted trade, and was by a kind Providence placed in a family where I wanted nothing that was needful either for body or soul.

2. From my early days, the Lord was at times powerfully working upon my soul. From ten or eleven years of age, I was exceedingly distressed. I generally saw, as I thought, hell before me, and believed it was to be my portion. The words "everlasting" and "eternity" were much upon my mind, insomuch that my life became a burden to me. For,

on the one hand, hell appeared intolerable; and, on the other, I found no delight in the service of God; so that my days were consumed in trouble. Frequently did I murmur against God, and often wished to be annihilated.

3. In this state I continued till I was fourteen, though with some intervals. I was then a little more at ease, and followed what are called "recreations." But from fifteen I was more inclined to reading, and for some time spent all my vacant hours in reading Scripture; and took much pleasure therein. Between sixteen and seventeen I found much delight in prayer, and had many inward consolations, though I had never then heard anyone speak of the comforts of the Holy Ghost. But, having none to speak to about these things, they gradually died away. From seventeen to nineteen was the most careless part of my life. I now sought pleasure in mirth and company. But the Lord generally disappointed me, and made it bitter to my soul. I could not find any companions to my mind. I sought mirth; but I thought they carried it to excess. And I could not bear their taking the name of God in vain. Hence I had much sorrow at times; likewise, the looking back, and seeing what seriousness I had fallen from cut me to the heart.

4. During this time I now and then heard that blessed man, Mr. Grimshaw, and made good resolutions; but they lasted not long. Meanwhile I had heard of a people called Methodists; but I was little concerned about them, till I heard some of them preach. I liked them well, and heard them more and more frequently. And though I was not deeply affected under any particular sermon, yet my conscience was gradually enlightened, by hearing, and

reading, and conversing, and praying, till I resolved to cast in my lot among them. From that time my heart was so united to them, that all at once I dropped all my former companions. And, blessed be God, from that hour I have never had one desire to turn back.

5. I now loved the Bible more than ever, particularly the New Testament. This was my daily companion; and in reading and meditating upon it I found great delight. And hereby I was delivered from a temptation to think, "These are the false prophets we are bidden to be aware of." This vanished away, when I compared their doctrines and practice with my Bible. And my judgment was more fully and clearly informed of all the essential doctrines of Christianity. And in the use of these means, God frequently met me, and comforted my soul. Indeed, the doctrine of salvation by grace was unspeakably comfortable to me. Yet, shortly after, I sunk almost all at once into a desponding state, which continued more than a year. And though during this time I was often comforted, both under the word and in prayer, yet I do not remember passing four-and-twenty hours together without being some part of the time in despair.

6. In this period I was continually tempted to think myself a hypocrite. Once I mentioned this to a friend, but got no comfort at all, which shut my mouth for a long time. It is impossible to express the anguish I felt. I longed for death, though I knew I was not fit for it. But in the midst of all, I constantly heard the preaching at all opportunities, and never omitted prayer. When I could say nothing, I groaned before God; resolving if I perished, (as I expected to do,) it should be in the means of grace.

7. Yet even in this period the Lord did not leave me. As I was one night on my knees groaning before Him, those words were powerfully applied to my soul, "Thou shalt bear My name before much people." And this impression never after left my mind long together, which often constrained me to hope that the Lord would some time help me. Also, during all this time, I had favour with my master and mistress and all the family; although they did not much like the people to whom I belonged. Toward the end of this gloomy season, one evening, when sitting in the house, I took courage, rose up, and desired we might have family prayer. I kneeled down, and so did all the family, and prayed with great freedom. And I continued it, though only an apprentice; which proved a great blessing to my own soul. For it kept me watchful all the day long, lest my prayer and my life should contradict each other.

8. Soon after I was desired to pray in another family, which I did several times. I had now more hope; and one day, being alone great part of the day, and much engaged in meditation and prayer, I found a persuasion that God was willing to receive me. I left my business immediately, and went to prayer. In a moment God broke in upon my soul in so wonderful a manner, that I could no longer doubt of His forgiving love. I cried, "My Lord and my God!" And in the spirit I was then in, I could have praised, and loved, and waited to all eternity.

9. Before this, I had attended several meetings for prayer. I was now, unawares, brought to conduct those meetings, and sometimes to speak a few words in His name whom I loved. When the meetings were over, others asked me to come to their houses, which I promised to do. But when I came

home, I feared I had gone too far, and resolved to make no more such promises. One night as I was going to a neighbour's house, one of my master's daughters, who was going with me, said, "My father and mother are not pleased with your proceedings." I asked, "Why, what have I done?" She said, "They would not have you go to such houses. But if you think it is your duty to keep meetings in the neighbourhood, they would have you keep them at home."

10. That night my soul was greatly comforted, and I gave notice of speaking at home on Sunday evening. We had abundance of people, and neither my master nor mistress seemed to be at all displeased. They loved me dearly, and let me go wherever I would. But in the midst of all these outward blessings, I had many inward trials. Sometimes I doubted of my state; sometimes I feared I had run before I was sent; and many times said, with Jeremiah, "I will speak no more in this name." And thus I continued for several months, though many were blessed and comforted in hearing me. Frequently I consulted my dear friend Mr. Grimshaw, who strongly exhorted me not to be faint or weary, but to go on valiantly in the work to which God had called me.

11. About this time I was invited to go to Harding-Moor, Lingbopin near Wilsdon, and Thornton above Bradford. As these were places where no one had preached yet, I thought if God would own me here, and raise up a people for Himself, I shall know that He hath sent me. He did so; many found peace with God, and a society was raised at each place. After delivering these up to the travelling preachers, I went to Long-Addingham. There

also God was pleased to set to His seal. A society was quickly raised. Many sinners were convinced, and several of them truly converted to God.

12. During all this time I wrought exceedingly hard at my own business when I was at home ; but the going up and down to preach frequently took up more than half my time. After a while, Providence called me to Greenough-Hill, to Hartwith, and some other places ; at each of which it pleased God to raise up a people for Himself. After I had preached some time at Greenough-Hill, I was invited to Pateley-Bridge. Here I was called to an exercise of my faith which I had not hitherto known. The first time I was there, Mr. — had prepared and encouraged a numerous mob, who spared neither mud nor stones, with many strokes besides, so that they themselves owned, "We have done enough to make an end of him." I did, indeed, reel to and fro, and my head was broken with a stone. But I never found my soul more happy, nor was ever more composed in my closet. It was a glorious time ; and there are several who date their conversion from that day. After I was a little cleaned, I went to a neighbouring town, where, when my head was dressed, I preached abroad to abundance of people, many of whom had followed me from Pateley-Bridge. Some of the mob also followed : but, as the wretched minister was not present to head them, and as they were greatly out-numbered, they behaved peaceably ; and the Lord blessed us much.

13. Having now laboured near four years, and travelled generally on foot, having been often thoroughly wet, and obliged to keep on my wet clothes all day, and having frequently, when at home, worked at night, that I might not be burdensome to

any ; I found I was not so strong as formerly. And the number of places still increasing, I was obliged, though much against my will, to give up business, and buy a horse. Mr. Grimshaw now sent me into his Circuit for a month, sending another preacher in my place. Then I returned, and spent a considerable time together among the new societies.

14. In the year 1752, and during the winter following, the work of God prospered exceedingly ; but persecution raged on every side. The malice of the devil was chiefly levelled against me, as I was the first that disturbed his servants in these parts. So that wherever I went, I was in much danger, carrying as it were my life in my hand. One day, as I was going through Pateley, the captain of the mob, who was kept in constant pay, pursued me, and pulled me off my horse. The mob then soon collected about me ; and one or other struck up my heels (I believe, more than twenty times) upon the stones. They then dragged me into a house by the hair of the head ; then pushed me back, with one or two upon me, and threw me with the small of my back upon the edge of the stone stairs. This nearly broke my back ; and it was not well for many years after. Thence they dragged me down to the common sewer, which carries the dirt from the town to the river. They rolled me in it for some time ; then dragged me to the bridge, and threw me into the water. They had me mostly on the ground, my strength being quite spent.

15. My wife, with some friends, now came up. Seeing her busy about me, some asked, "What, are you a Methodist?" gave her several blows, which made her bleed at the mouth, and swore they would put her into the river. All this time I lay upon the

ground, the mob being undetermined what to do. Some cried out, "Make an end of him." Others were for sparing my life: but the dispute was cut short, by their agreeing to put some others into the water. So they took them away, leaving me and my wife together. She endeavoured to raise me up; but, having no strength, I dropped down to the ground again. She got me up again, and supported me about an hundred yards; then I was set on horseback, and made a shift to ride softly, as far as Michael Granger's house. Here I was stripped from head to foot, and was washed. I left my wet clothes here, and rode to Greenough-Hill, where many were waiting for me; and, though much bruised and very weak, preached a short sermon, from Psalm xxxiv. 19: "Many are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

16. The next morning I preached again. Afterwards several accompanied me a by-way to North-pasture. There were many serious hearers; but the captain of the mob came, and made some disturbance, and then with a great stick broke every pane of glass in a large window. This made a little confusion at first; but afterwards the Lord poured down His blessing in an uncommon manner. Almost all were in tears, and the people took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Thence we rode to Hartwith, where we had peace, and the power of the Lord was with us. But when the work of the day was over, I was so bruised and sore, that I was obliged to be undressed by another.

17. This summer, autumn, and winter were times of hot persecution. Our friends frequently suffered, when they went upon business to Pateley-Bridge.

Their clothes were spoiled, and their persons much abused. They applied for justice to the Dean of Ripon, but found none. But what made amends was, we loved each other dearly, and had exceedingly comfortable seasons together. In January I was invited to preach about a mile from Pateley. When I came, the mob was gathered. However, in the name of the Lord I began; and though they blasphemed horribly, and broke the windows, I was not interrupted or discomposed, but prayed, preached, and concluded in peace. As soon as I had ended, they became outrageous. I retired into a chamber, and gave myself to prayer. While I was on my knees, one came and informed me, the mob had forced into the house, and would quickly be in the chamber; but that I must get out at the window, and there were some friends below, who would catch me as I fell.

18. In a while, being desired to preach there again, I fixed it in the day-time, thinking the mob would not leave their work to disturb us. But they soon came, and surrounded the house, so that I could not preach at all. After I had been kept prisoner for several hours, I was obliged to run for my life. About the same time I was invited to Garthit-Hall, where I preached in the open air with little interruption; but when I went again, the Pateley mob came, though the floods were out. When I began to preach, they were more and more violent, till I was forced to desist and retire. Being resolved I should not escape again, they surrounded the house till near sunset. Then they ran to beat one of the people. Our friends snatched the opportunity and brought me a horse, which I imme-

diately mounted. The mob seeing this left him, and pursued me. But again God delivered me out of their hands.

19. But hearing I was to preach some miles off, on the other side of the water, they immediately divided (it being a great flood) to the different bridges. This obliged us to ride many miles about. It being very dark, we lost our way upon the moors. We wandered till we were thoroughly wet with snow and rain ; but late at night found our way to Thomas Lupton's. The congregation had waited for several hours, being in much trouble for fear I was killed. I changed my clothes, and, though it was late, preached to them as the Lord enabled me. It seemed to us little less than heaven ; and though it was a hard day, it was a blessed day to my soul.

20. I remember once, during these seasons of trouble, wherein my life continually hung in suspense, a thought came into my mind, "It is hard to have no respite, to be thus perpetually suffering." Immediately it was impressed upon my mind, "Did you not, when you was on the borders of despair, promise the Lord, that if He would give you an assurance of His favour, you would count no suffering, sorrow, or affliction too great to be endured for His name's sake?" This at once silenced all murmuring ; and thenceforth I bore whatever befell me with patience, and after with joy : finding a willingness to bear it, as long as He saw meet, if it were to the end of my life.

21. About this time, I had thirteen or fourteen places where I preached regularly. And I thought only of spending my life among them, when Mr. Grimshaw mentioned me to you. You sent for me, and asked, whether I was willing to be a travelling

preacher. I said "Yes, if Mr. Grimshaw would supply my places:" which he promised to do. That year I was most in the Birstal and Leeds Circuits: the next in the Leeds Circuit altogether, which then comprehended Sheffield, and York also; extending into Derbyshire on the south, to Hull on the east, and on the north as far as Newton, under Rosebury-Topping.

22. In the year 1758 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. The whole county, now divided into three, was then only in one Circuit. So I spent two months in the eastern part, and then two months in the western. I was in this Circuit about sixteen months in all. And I did not labour in vain. There was a very considerable increase in the societies, and many souls were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And though the rides were long, and the work was hard, yet all was made easy and comfortable. The Lord was greatly with us, and the people in general were loving and teachable; and I know not, if I shall ever love a people better on this side eternity.

23. Thence I removed into the Newcastle Circuit, which then included Edinburgh: to which we went, and back again in a fortnight, generally preaching night and morning. I found many trials in this Circuit, but the Lord delivered me out of all. The next year I was in the Manchester round, which then contained Lancashire, Cheshire, part of Shropshire, and of Wales, Staffordshire, and part of Derbyshire. Our labour was hard; but we saw much fruit of it, particularly at Manchester and Bolton. In the latter part of the year I was generally supposed to be far gone in a consumption. I was not careful about it, not doubting but if the Lord called

me, I should finish my course with joy. But it pleased God to restore my health and strength. May I still glorify Him with my body and my spirit!

24. After some years I went, accompanied with my wife, to Edinburgh. Mr. Hopper laboured with me. It was now Dr. Erskine published and recommended the eleven Letters, ascribed to Mr. Hervey. This occasioned a good deal of reproach for a time; after which I was called away to Newcastle. The weather was very severe. Day after day we had various storms, and were hardly able to preserve life. But the worst was, when we came to the steep descent from the mountains, called the Pease, where the hill had fallen into the deep road, and made it utterly impassable. This obliged us to creep along a path like a sheep-track, hanging over a deep vale. Meantime the snow and wind beat so furiously upon us, that we knew not if we should escape with life. After lodging at Old Cammus, (a most uncomfortable inn,) we went forward through sharp frost, heavy snow beating upon us, and miserable roads to Alnwick. From thence to Morpeth we had fair weather; but the next day was heavy rain, which attended us all the way to Newcastle. And here I remained, fully employed till the Manchester Conference.

25. In 1760 I was stationed at Epworth once more. This winter we were invited to Newark-upon-Trent. But we met with much opposition from riotous mobs, encouraged by great men. On the 24th of March they took the pulpit out of the preaching-house, and burned it in the market-place. I went thither on the 7th of April, with Mr. and Mrs. Pool, of North Scarle. The preaching was to begin at two o'clock; but a large mob was there

before I began. I prayed, and preached a short sermon. Toward the latter end of the discourse, they threw a large quantity of eggs filled with blood, and sealed with pitch, which made strange work wherever they alighted. When they had discharged these, they grew more outrageous still. We judged it best to send to the mayor. But, instead of coming to quell the riot, he sent an order for me to appear before him. In our way to the main street, there was a deep, muddy drain. They attempted to push me into it. But I caught hold of one of the mob, and held him so fast, that they could not push in one without the other. When we came to the mayor's, he sent for the town-clerk. I showed them the Act of Toleration, and the certificate of my licence, observing I had done nothing which was not warranted by law. After much conversation, our friends gave evidence against three of the rioters, who were bound over to the assizes.

26. Some thousands of the mob being gathered in the street, I requested the mayor to send an officer to guard me through them. He said, he would go himself. And he did go to the gate; but when I was gone out, immediately went back. I was presently surrounded; and they soon began to throw mire, clods of earth, and stones in abundance. This they continued to do, all down the street, till we came to the preaching-house. Our friends, judging there would be no safety there, brought my great coat into the stable, and advised me to mount and gallop through the mob, which I purposed to do. Accordingly, I mounted; but some of them held the gate, and others beat both me and my mare in so violent a manner, that I thought it would be best to dismount and go the back way. But here also the

mob met me, beat both me and the mare, and when I endeavoured to mount, pulled me back, and the mare got from me. Then they dragged me along, sometimes on my feet, and sometimes on the ground, to the side of the Trent, swearing they would throw me in. But they were not agreed to this; so they brought water, and poured it upon me from head to foot. A painter then came with his pot and brush, and laid it on plentifully. They still surrounded me, throwing dirt, and beating me till I could hardly stir. Then they offered to let me go, if I would promise never to come again. But this I could not do. Just then a man came cursing, swearing, and threatening, offended, it seemed, at their proceedings; at which most of them left me, and dispersed.

27. I rose up, and walked as well as I could down the Marsh, a few of the mob quietly walking with me. I found my mare in a standing water: I went in, took her, and rode off. Coming to a pond, I alighted, washed myself a little, and then went on to North Scarle; but it was hard work, as the night came on, and I was very wet, and exceedingly cold. When I got there, I procured some dry clothes, and the Lord gave me a quiet night. The next day I was very sore and weak: however, I sat up most of the day, and in a little time I recovered my strength, and had still more cause to trust and praise God.

28. On July 16th was our trial at Nottingham. But the grand jury, sparing the rioters all they could, would not find the bill for disturbing me at public worship, but only for assaulting me. They were accordingly bound over, to be tried for the assault at the next assizes. Meantime an innumerable mob was collected both within and without the court, threatening what they would do to me. I therefore

addressed the recorder for a guard. He immediately ordered two constables to conduct me safe to my lodging: the mob roared; but durst go no farther. So I returned home unmolested. At the following assizes several of the rioters were indicted: judge's warrants were issued out and executed. In October my counsel and the recorder agreed (to prevent all farther trouble) what each offender should pay, after making submission, and promising to offend no more. The recorder then gave them a very pertinent exhortation, and, hearing the Nottingham mob was collected again, sent two constables to guard me to my lodgings, and ordered them to give the people notice, that if any man offered to assault me, he would immediately send him to prison. Thus ended the troublesome affair at Newark. Since then the work of God has prospered greatly. And a convenient preaching-house has been built, in which numerous congregations meet without any disturbance.

29. Thus have I given you a few imperfect hints of the manner wherein our Lord has dealt with me. My whole life, particularly since I have known something of the saving power of religion, has been attended all along with manifold trials, a thousand times more than I have related: yet has the Lord been exceedingly gracious to me, the most unworthy of all His people. If I this moment saw all the sufferings I have had for His name's sake; if they were now spread before me, I would say, "Lord, if Thou wilt give me strength, I will now begin again, and Thou shalt add to them lions' dens, and fiery furnaces, and by Thy grace I will go through them all." My life, though attended with many crosses, has been a life of mercies.



John Pint

Maguire Sen. &

MATHIAS JOYCE,
Preacher of the Gospel.

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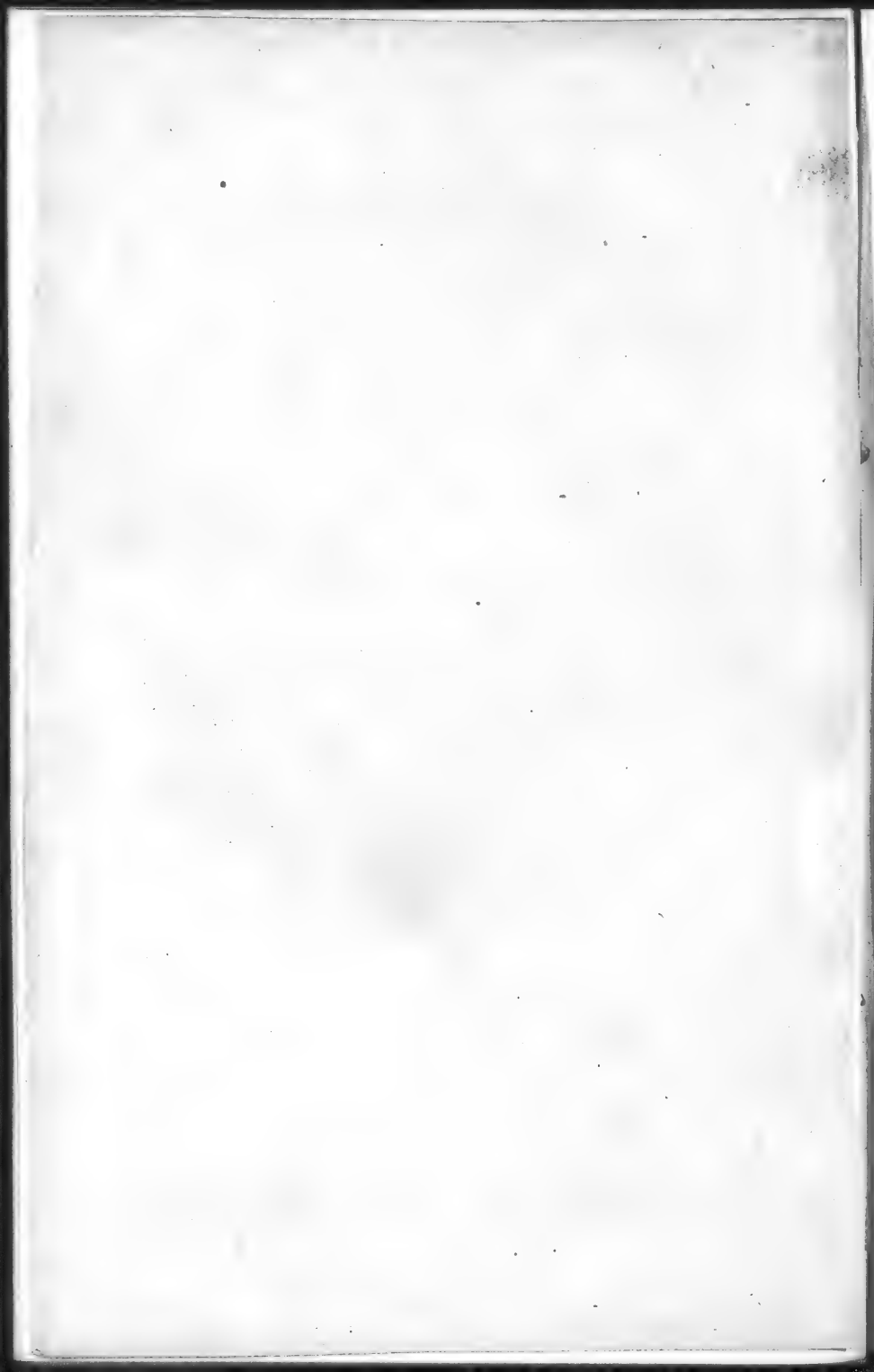
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Matthias Joyce

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MATTHIAS JOYCE,
Preacher of the Gospel.



For more than twenty years, I have rarely preached upon the controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. But my judgment is fixed: I have no doubt, either of Christ's tasting death for every man, or of His being able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him. I count it one of the greatest favours, that He still allows me to do a little for Him, and that He in any measure owns the little which I am able to speak in His name. I beg that I may be humble at His feet all the days of my life, and may be more and more like Him whom my soul loveth, till at last I reign with Him in glory!

I am, dear Sir,

Your willing, though unworthy servant in
the Gospel,

THOMAS LEE.

October 30th, 1779.

*A short Account of the Death of Mr. Thomas Lee:
in a Letter to the Rev. John Wesley; written by
Mrs. Lee.*

REV. SIR,

MY dear husband's last illness began with a pain in his foot, which soon went up into his leg. When he mentioned it, we thought it was the rheumatism, and applied many things to warm it. By these means it seemingly got better. After some time it ascended into his thigh, and became very exquisite. On the morning before he died, the violence of the pain abated a little; but in the afternoon grew worse again, yet we had no apprehension of his death.

The evening before he died, he expressed great resignation to the will of the Lord: though, as he said, the pains drank up his spirits. He said, "I am the Lord's; and I feel that I am united to Him; and I know I shall be with Him for ever!"

He preached twice the Sunday before he died; although he went to the preaching-house on crutches, and sat all the time he preached. His first text that day was, "All flesh is as grass, and the glory thereof is as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." His last text was, "Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear the Lord," &c. In this sermon he said, "Perhaps this will be my last sermon:" and truly the power of the Lord was solemnly felt by most present. And, as if he saw his end was near, he gave out a funeral hymn. And when he came to those words,—

"By faith we already behold
That lovely Jerusalem here;
Her walls are of jasper and gold,
As crystal her buildings are clear;"

he seemed to be quite transported at the thought of meeting Jesus.

The night in which he died, I went to bed as usual. But before I slept, the pain flew up to his heart. On this I arose, and called in George Eskrick. We raised him up, and put something in his mouth, which came out again. He was so sensible, as to take my handkerchief to wipe it up. We laid him down again. He sobbed several times, looked up once, and smiled; closed his eyes, and gently fell asleep.

A few months before, he told me he had never such a view of God's love towards him as he had that morning in prayer. The following words were then made a great blessing to him: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." From that time I believe he never had a shadow of doubt on his mind concerning his eternal welfare.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Yours affectionately,

MARY LEE.

BOLTON, *September 9th*, 1786.

IN the Minutes of Conference for the year 1787 Mr. Wesley describes Mr. Lee as a "faithful brother, and a good old soldier of Jesus Christ."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN PRICKARD.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in New-Mote, in Pembrokeshire, on the 3d of August, 1744. That village was then the freest from vice I ever saw. This circumstance I have reason to be thankful for, as I spent the greatest part of my childhood without seeing or hearing much of outward wickedness.

When I was about nine years old my father removed, with all his family, to Creswell-Quay, in the same county, where he has lived ever since. There the scene was sadly changed: it being a creek of Milford Haven, where a vast quantity of coals is shipped off, the great resort of sailors and of other strangers introduced cursing, swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, with many foolish and wicked amusements.

My parents (who were religiously disposed) restrained their children as much as possible from the company of wicked children; and, by that means, through the blessing of God, we were kept from outward wickedness. Nevertheless, I sometimes took the advantage of their absence, (when they have

been gone to hear the word,) and have played in the streets, or else gone a pleasuring on the water, on a Sabbath-day. I was also much inclined to go to cock-fightings and other amusements, but was happily prevented.

I lived with my parents till I was about seventeen, during which time I had frequent drawings of the Spirit of God, and many severe reproaches of conscience. Very often did I hear the word with pleasure, especially from Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Howel Davies, and believed all the truth so far as I was instructed: indeed, I believed more than the truth, more than I can believe now; for I was a thorough Predestinarian, not hesitating even at reprobation! But all this time I was a stranger to God and my own heart.

In the latter end of the year 1761 I removed to Brecon, to an uncle. He at that time disliked the Methodists, thinking it sufficient to go to church twice on Sundays; which he did, and obliged all his family to do the same. But he laid no restraint on me. I might go to hear the Methodists if I chose. But as I was now got from under the tuition of my parents, and being rather ashamed of the cross, I neglected the preaching entirely. Nor was this all; for (being free from outward restraint) I fell into open sin, such as swearing, cursing, breaking the Sabbath, and sometimes (for the sake of company) I drank to excess.

At first I felt some remorse of conscience, but soon found that sin hardeneth the heart. For after awhile I became an habitual swearer, and gave my mind up to vanity. I went on thus for three years and upwards, though I had frequent checks of conscience, and always believed that if I did not mend

my ways, I must go to hell; yea, I often resolved in my own mind, that I must be a Christian indeed, be born of God, or I could not be saved. I therefore fully intended to be truly religious, and to be a Methodist, when I was settled in the world. Indeed, though I never was so uncharitable as to think that none could be saved but they, yet (as I believed them to be the most scriptural in their sentiments of any I knew) I always thought it my duty to join them some time or other. Thus I held a good part of the truth in unrighteousness; yet I went so far as to dispute warmly with my cousin in its defence, and often confuted him by quotations out of the Common Prayer-book. But, alas! I was all this time ashamed of the people I knew to be the children of God, and also an enemy to God both in heart and in life.

When I was a little turned twenty, my eldest cousin (a sober, industrious, sensible young man) died of consumption. He lingered above a year, and had constant hopes of recovery; but being at length confined to his bed, he gave up all hopes of life. About four days before he died, his father was in the room with him, and heard him burst out into a sudden bewailing of his sins. His father said, "My dear, you have led a regular, sober life, and there can be no fear of you: if you are not safe, what will become of such a sinner as I, and thousands more?" His son replied, "But I have been a negligent sinner," and refused to be comforted by all his father could say. The day he died (his father being still in the room with him) he lay quiet for a considerable time, till he heard the clock strike one. He then lifted himself up on his pillow, (though he had not been able to turn in bed for many days

before,) and cried out, "O, happy hour! happy hour!" and presently died. Thus God made one a dying witness of the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, who did not believe the doctrine till a very little before his death.

This extraordinary death of so near a relation was a loud call to all the house, and to me in particular. But though it made some impression on me for a short season, it soon vanished away.

Soon after I heard an alarming sermon preached in our church upon the day of judgment. I was cut to the heart, and could get no rest all the afternoon. But I banished the impressions in the evening by going into company. Yet while I was there I had hard work to get rid of the sermon; the day of judgment still stared me in the face.

The summer following I fell into a decline, and lingered for some months. About the beginning of September, as I lay in my bed one night, all of a sudden the following thoughts struck me:—"My cousin died of this disorder last winter; and it is hardly possible that I shall live till spring. What! and must I die so soon? Then, as sure as I am now alive, I shall go to hell! Alas! I deserve nothing less; I can expect nothing less!" Then waiting for the young man who lay with me to go to sleep, I arose, and went to prayer, and besought the Lord to restore me to health; and solemnly promised that if He did, I would immediately turn to Him, hear His word, and own His people. And (O wonderful goodness!) He heard me, and gave me another trial; for in less than a fortnight I was better; and before winter set in, was quite recovered.

But alas! I did not keep my promise. It is true,

I heard the Methodists all the winter ; but as I recovered, my serious impressions wore off to such a degree, that when the days lengthened, (so that we must go by daylight to the preaching,) I was ashamed to go ! I also broke off all outward sins for a time ; but when I got quite out of danger, I returned to them again with greater greediness than ever ; and thus I continued all that year.

Early in the following spring I went to see my parents ; but all the time I was at home I behaved very undutifully, in refusing to be restrained from going to cock-fightings, &c. When they persuaded me with great tenderness, I had the audacity to tell them, (though against my conscience,) that they were as bigoted as Papists ! But I severely smarted for this before I found the Lord.

Some time after I returned to Brecon, I was providentially led to hear Mr. C. ; and being cut to the heart, I once more sought the Lord in earnest for a short time, and then fell into sin again.

Towards the latter end of the summer, 1767, my surviving cousin, Mr. William Miller, said to me one Sunday morning, " Will you go to hear Mr. Wesley, who is to preach at eight o'clock ? " I replied, " I will. " Accordingly, we went, and waited till Mr. Wesley came. When he appeared, the first sight I had of him so much affected me, that I could not soon forget it. Soon after he stood up and preached from the following words :—" The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. " Under this sermon I was more instructed than under all that I had heard before put together. In the evening he preached on " He healeth the broken in heart. " Both of these sermons were of such service to me,

that I never more gave such a loose to sin as I had done before; although soon after I fell from my former steadfastness, and lived carelessly for near a year.

The means of this fall was as follows:—Wanting to send a letter to my father, and hearing that there was a young man at the inn who was going to Pembroke, I took it to him to save the postage. And as he had lived some time in London, and was a sprightly young man, the enemy suggested that I was some years younger than he, and at present as likely to live. I therefore thought, Why should not I enjoy the pleasures of life a little longer as well as others, especially as I have no desire to be wicked? Thus the subtle adversary reasoned with me, while my foolish heart first listened, and then yielded to the temptation. I have often since regretted this fall more than all the rest; because it had not only all the aggravations of the others, but blasted the first fruits of Mr. Wesley's labour, which made such a promising appearance on my heart and mind.

In August, 1768, Lady Huntingdon opened her school at Trevecka. Among the scholars there, was a Mr. Shipman, one of those expelled from Oxford the year before. Under the second sermon he preached in Brecon I was again convinced of my wretched condition, and resolved once more to turn to God. I was so deeply affected, that I thought all in the house must have felt the same impressions; and indeed many did. Glory be to God, I have been enabled to hold on my way ever since! The Sunday following I heard Mr. Howel Harris, when the word sunk into my heart. I then began to mourn for all my sins, and to seek the pardon of them

through the blood of Jesus. I would also gladly have joined the society; but as no one asked me, I was afraid to ask them, because I had no acquaintance with any of them, and because I thought I was not fit to be among them; being much afraid I should fall again, and bring a scandal upon them. Indeed, I was afraid they would not receive me, and seemed to dread a refusal worse than death.

About a month before Christmas I had a strong desire to receive the sacrament; yet I trembled at the thought, lest I should eat and drink my own damnation.

As I wanted a new Common Prayer-book, the bookseller persuaded me to buy one with a Companion to the Altar in it: I took his advice. When I went home I read it, and the Lord so blessed it to my soul, that all my scruples were removed. Accordingly, I resolved to go to the Lord's table on Christmas-day. When the time came, I was overwhelmed with dread, and went trembling to the altar; but when the minister gave me the blessed elements, God gave me the sweet drawings of His love. This did not abide long; but while it did, I thought I was in heaven! Surely I have reason to love the Church of England; and, blessed be God, I have done so ever since; for I felt then, (as I have done many times since,) that the Lord can and doth give His blessing to all who come to His table trusting in Him; though neither minister nor congregation are truly spiritual people.

That evening Mr. Cheek preached in the Methodist meeting, and desired any who chose it to stay at the meeting of the society. I gladly accepted of the invitation. In his exhortation he said, "If any desired to join the society, they might speak to some

one who knew them, and they should be admitted on trial." As I longed to be joined to them, I spoke to Mr. J., and was that night admitted. I was soon known by all the society; and some of them who were Calvinists took great pains to confirm me in their opinions: but I never could hold them altogether after I was convinced of sin, and had tasted in a small degree that the Lord had pity upon me; for I concluded that if He was willing to save wretched, sinful me, He could find no one more unworthy of His mercy among the whole human race.

One evening as I was alone in a bower in my uncle's garden, the enemy wanted to trouble my mind about those things. On this I fell on my knees, and begged of the Lord to teach me what was right on either side, if it was necessary for me to know them. Immediately I felt those words impressed on my mind, "Be determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." I cried out, "Lord, that is enough;" and resolved that I would not give way to any such thoughts till I had found the Lord in pardoning love. Upon this I found more earnestness in seeking Him than ever, and often mourned in bitterness of spirit because I did not mourn enough.

One morning while I was hearing the word, I felt power to believe that my sins were forgiven; but in a moment I was robbed of the blessing, by the enemy's suggesting that I had not repented enough. Some time after, I rose (as usual) to read and pray; and as I was reading a sermon upon faith, the Lord again gave me power, not only to believe, but also to hold fast my confidence. O, what a heaven did then spring up in my soul! I felt that the kingdom of heaven is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the

Holy Ghost! My heart was filled with joy, and peace, and grateful love: I walked all that day in the light of God's countenance. At night that dear servant of God, Mr. Watkins, of Llanusk, met the class; and O, how did his soul rejoice, when he heard that another was born into his Father's kingdom! He conceived a great affection for me that night, which he retained to the day of his death. My life was then truly comfortable. I could bless God every hour that ever I was born.

In the latter end of that summer I was appointed a class-leader. I entered upon this office with great reluctance; yea, with fear and trembling: however, the Lord supported me. The society increased that winter, so that in the spring I was obliged to take charge of another class. Some time after there were prayer-meetings established, and the preachers desired me to take the conducting of them upon me.

After they had been continued some time, I found it impressed upon my mind to give a few words of exhortation; and we went on happily for some time. But in August, 1770, Lady Huntingdon proposed to Mr. B. that the chapel in Brecon should be reserved for the use of her scholars, and whomsoever her ladyship should appoint; by which means Mr. Wesley's preachers were to be entirely excluded. But Mr. B. refused to comply, and soon after settled the chapel on the Methodists. I then dreaded what soon followed; namely, a separation of the society. As I was strongly attached to some of the scholars, it was like death to me to be separated from them; but I saw the unreasonableness of their proceedings. Lady Huntingdon had not given a shilling towards building the chapel, but Mr. Wesley had subscribed eighty pounds. I considered farther

that the society had been raised and kept up for near twenty years by means of Mr. Wesley and his preachers. Her ladyship said to several of us who waited upon her on the occasion, that she had no objection to Mr. Wesley; that she loved and honoured him; that her sole reason for separating was a desire to see what good her students would do separate from everybody else. Soon after her ladyship sent one of the students to town to preach in another place, at the same time our preacher was in the chapel. This distressed me much. I had the cause of God much at heart, and I feared such proceedings would injure it greatly; but God overruled all for good.

I never till now felt what may be called the fiery darts of the devil. He tempted me several times in one night to drown myself; and I had many other horrid temptations. But God provided me a friend in the time of adversity. Robert Phillips lived in the same house with me, and was witness to all my distresses. He was an exceedingly pious, as well as sensible, young man. When he saw me in deep distress, and undetermined which side to take, he laboured with all his might to compose my mind; which he happily accomplished; and when that was done, my attachment to Mr. Wesley, the justice of his cause, and my being now almost clear in his sentiments, soon determined me to stay where God had called me: on this I soon got the better of my uneasiness, and my former tranquillity revived.

I have since thought that the Lord permitted me to feel more upon this occasion than anyone else, to prepare me for what He intended concerning me.

A few months after, Robert Phillips urged me very fervently to begin to preach. I was much

affected when he spoke to me on that head. But when he asked me if I ever felt any inclination or disposition of mind towards it, I could not say but I had ; yet I could not say assuredly that it was from God : therefore, I always suppressed the thoughts. Soon after, one of the preachers was taken ill, and I went to Llanusk to desire Mr. Watkins to go and preach for him at Llangene. But as Mr. Watkins was ill also, he desired me to go. But I told him I durst not, till I was sure I was called of God.

The next week, brother Phillips collected together some of the most sensible and pious of our society, and one Watkin Watkins, (a gracious young man,) of Lady Huntingdon's society. We continued in prayer till near midnight ; and before we parted, all present with one consent declared, they believed God had called me to preach the Gospel, and urged me at last to make a trial. I was still very timorous, and must own I had a dislike to being a Methodist preacher, knowing that he has a larger portion of reproach than others. Yet this was not the principal reason of my reluctance ; but the very great importance of the work. But as I durst not be inattentive to the persuasion of my friends, and to what I felt in my own heart, when most happy, I consented to make a trial, and accordingly went to Llangene. And though I was not so happy as usual in my own mind, (being much agitated,) yet the power of the Lord was present. He gave me utterance, and many were comforted greatly. But this did not satisfy me. For as there were none awakened nor justified that I knew of, I resolved as I went home, that I would go no more. Indeed, I was very glad that the trial was over, and that I had now, as I thought, full proof that I was not called, and that I should no more be

troubled with such thoughts. But God forgave me this rash resolution, and my reluctance to take up the cross. When I went home, all my friends were still of the same opinion, that I should go on. Mr. Watkins went to the same place the following Sunday, and gave out that I should be there on that day week. I went with great reluctance; but just before the time of preaching I poured out my soul before the Lord in prayer, entreating Him to give me a token of His will in blessing my endeavours, if He approved of my proceedings. I prayed in faith, and the Lord heard me. My own soul was overwhelmed with Divine love, and many were filled with the presence of the Lord, and some with godly sorrow. From that time I have been kept from having many doubts respecting my call to preach the Gospel.

The following spring and summer I exercised my small talents principally in the neighbourhood where I began. And at the end of the year both Mr. Dempster and Mr. Rodda advised me to give myself up entirely to the work at the ensuing Conference; but as I much doubted my abilities for a travelling preacher, and thought I should be useful in that neighbourhood as a local preacher, I declined it. After Conference I had work enough; for there was one preacher less than the year before appointed for the Circuit, and I was called to supply the vacant Sundays at Brecon and the Hay.

Mr. Fletcher's "First Check" came out about this time. I read it with attention and prayer, and all that followed as they came out: and I bless God I ever saw them; for I have had no doubt of the truth ever since.

Several of the preachers every year advised me to

travel; but as I was useful where I was, I could not think of leaving that town till God had raised one up to supply my place as a local preacher, especially as I knew the Circuit was not able to support another travelling preacher.

The summer following, I lost a good friend, Mr. Howel Harris. He had often given me good advice. I went to see him about nine days before he died. I shall never forget his parting words to me and another young preacher: "My dear young men," said he, "wherever you are, take care to maintain that the only reason why all are not saved is, that which the Saviour hath given, 'They will not come unto Me that they may have life.'" The next winter I lost another great friend, the dearest to me of any man living, Mr. Watkins, of Llanusk. He had been a zealous preacher for twenty years, and enjoyed the love of God uninterruptedly for four-and-twenty years. He had taken great pains with me from our first acquaintance. When I took my last farewell of him, he said, "O my dear John," (the tears flowing from his eyes,) "the enemy strives to have my life; but it is hid with Christ in God." He died soon after in full triumph of faith. I may safely say that he did not leave his fellow behind him, in all that country, for deep piety, Christian experience, zeal for God, and true benevolence. He feared not the face of any man, if he met him in defence of the cause of God; but I have seen him submit like a lamb when his own reputation has been shamefully traduced, though I knew he was as innocent as a new-born child of the things laid to his charge. Thus lived and thus died my dear friend; and as such I mourned for him. O that I may be found at his feet in the day of the Lord!

About this time Mr. Church began to preach. I then thought, God was making my way clear to go into the work. But a thought struck me, (and followed me for many days,) that God had raised many preachers in England and America; but few, if any, in the West Indies. It was therefore strongly impressed on my mind that I ought to offer myself to go thither. Accordingly, I mentioned it to Mr. J. Brittel, who said he would go with me, if I was approved of. I then wrote to Mr. Wesley upon the subject; but he, not approving of it, advised me to go to Kingswood till Conference, and told me he would then appoint me a Circuit. But my friends were loth to part with me; and, at that time, I was dubious of my call to travel in England; supposing there were plenty of travelling preachers there; and therefore I declined taking his advice respecting Kingswood, and waited to see if God would reveal His mind to me more fully between that and the Conference. And though I laid it before Him with great earnestness, I was rather in suspense till a few days before the Conference sat; when I came to a determination to write to him, and to desire him to decide it for me. Soon after the Conference I received a letter from him, informing me that he had appointed me to the Glamorganshire Circuit. I then prepared for my journey, and went off as soon as possible. At my first setting off the Lord gave me great encouragement; for the people were loving and kind, and Mr. Boon, my fellow-labourer, watched over me in tender love. He saw my weakness and defects, and studied my improvement in all things.

The next year I was appointed to the Pembroke-shire Circuit. Mr. Bradburn was exceedingly kind

to me ; he took as much pains with me as if I had been his brother. That year we had some fruit of our labours, especially at Carmarthen ; but we had many trials also. However, I can bless the time that I was appointed there, if it was only for the sake of being a year with Mr. Bradburn. Mr. Dixon was my other partner, whose steadiness and meekness were of great use to me.

The next year I was appointed for Glamorganshire again, to labour with plain, honest Mr. Ashman. We spent a happy year together. It is remarkable that the two years I was in that Circuit, there was very little good or harm done among us. The congregations, in several places, were tolerably large and lively ; but yet few were convinced or converted.

At the next Conference I was sent to Londonderry, to labour with Mr. Watkinson. We had many trying circumstances to encounter here ; but we lived and acted in perfect harmony, and had some fruit of our labours, which made our trials much easier. That year the Lord was pleased to carry on a great work at Coleraine, which has continued ever since. Two clergymen of the Established Church, Mr. B. and another, whose name I have forgotten, were favourable to the cause, and kind to us.

While I was in this Circuit, I received a circular letter respecting an African Mission. As soon as I read it, I felt a strong desire to offer myself to go ; yet my nature shuddered at the thought of leaving father and mother, brothers and sisters, friends and country, but especially my dear brethren in Christ. I also dreaded the intense heat of the sun by day, and the damps of the night ; which I had heard were in general fatal to an European constitution.

In this deep distress I prayed to the Lord that He would give me direction and strength. The next morning I went to church, when one of the Psalms for the day was the one hundred and twenty-first. In reading it, I viewed it as an answer to my prayer. But when we came to the fifth verse, my soul was so overwhelmed with Divine love, that I could no longer doubt of the will of God concerning me. As we read on, I resolved to offer myself to go, on which all my fear and dread vanished away.

I think I should not do justice to this narrative, if I did not insert the fifth and following verses. "The Lord Himself is thy keeper: the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand; so that the sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; yea, it is He that shall keep thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore." Having received this clear answer to my prayer, I hesitated no longer; but offered myself freely and fully, if approved of by my brethren in Conference. But they did not approve of the Mission itself, on account of the war: so the matter was for that time laid aside.

I have often thought since, that they were too cautious; and sometimes I have thought, that because they would not give me up at all hazards to the Lord, He has shown them what He can do in my native country; for I have had two violent fevers since, and by the last have been rendered incapable of doing much for near two years. I know it was tenderness in my dear brethren; but I have always been of opinion that we ought to have gone; and if the Lord ever restores me to tolerable health, and it is judged right to send out a Mission into

those dark regions, I hope I shall be as ready to go as ever.

While the matter was in suspense, I wrote to Mr. L., of Pembroke, to acquaint my parents of my intention. In a short time he wrote me word, that when he told them, they said, they had given me up to the Lord when I first set out to travel, and were determined never to recall me. This gave me great comfort; for, as they are tender, loving parents, it would have added much to my affliction, if they had opposed my going.

The next year I was appointed for Ireland, to labour in the Lisburn Circuit. This was a year of great trouble; but I was enabled to bear it all for the sake of God and His cause:

In the month of February the ship "Lydia" (a letter of marque, of above three hundred tons burden, belonging to Messrs. Robinson and Chorley, of Liverpool) was wrecked near Sheepland, in the isle of Cale, when all the crew (except one man) perished. She was outward-bound, and richly laden with various kinds of English and Irish manufactures. We had several societies in that neighbourhood; and many of our people went with the rest of the country people to plunder the wreck, and others of them bought or received presents of the stolen goods.

Before I came to that end of the Circuit I had to preach at a new place (Kirkeel) in the mountains of Mourn. At the time appointed there was so large a congregation assembled, that the little house would not hold one quarter of them. And as they had never seen a Methodist preacher before, they urged me to come out. But I objected, as it blew and rained very hard, and was also rather late in the night. To this they replied, that I should be as

well off as they, and better; for they would make me a tent on the lee-side of the house, with boat-sails. As I found they began to be clamorous, I put my cloak on, and went out immediately; for I saw they would be long in making the tent. Accordingly, I preached near an hour, while the people were as attentive as if they had been in a church. That night a work began which flourished for some time, and was in a good state when brother B. left the Circuit the year following. How it has been since I do not know.

But preaching out of doors in the night, and in such weather, gave me a dreadful cold. In this state I went among our poor fallen people in the isle of Cale, and found that every society had, more or less, been partakers of the accursed thing, except that dear people in Shangford. I therefore found I had nothing to do but to get rid of them, and at the same time to preach repentance and restitution unto them. My preaching had the desired effect with many, who came with tears in their eyes, and proposed restitution as far as they were able. Nevertheless, I thought it my duty to put them out of the society for a season, as their crime was so glaring, and of so heinous a nature. I considered that repentance was all that we could require for the offence against God, and restitution was all we could insist on for the offence they had committed against their neighbour; but they could make no satisfaction for the scandal they had brought on the people of God, but by being publicly put out of the society, and kept out for a season. I accordingly, with an almost broken heart, read out sixty-three in Downpatrick on the Sunday evening; adding, that those who would make restitution should be restored at a proper time;

but those who would not, should be recorded in the general steward's book, with an account both of their crime and obstinacy.

This severity (as some called it) had in a great degree its desired effect. It entirely rolled away the reproach that would otherwise have stuck to the Methodists, and prevented our usefulness in those parts. On our removing the preaching from the place where the depredations were committed, a creditable farmer took us in, where much larger congregations assembled, and where a good society was raised before the year was out.

All this time the cold I had taken at Kirkeel increased daily, for want of time to take something to remove it. I was also almost heart-broken for the great evil that was done; which both together threw me into a violent fever. But herein I experienced much of the tender dealings of God. I was seized with the fever in Lisburn, and in one of the tenderest families in Ireland, where the accommodations were every way suitable to my condition. Here I lay in a very dangerous way for three days. But my physician (Dr. Bell) was very attentive. The fourth day I was out of danger, and recovered so fast, that I preached in a fortnight from the beginning of my fever, and was on my Circuit in three weeks.

This fever was a great blessing to my soul; for I felt the truth of those words, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." It was also good for my body, as it removed a consumptive habit which I had laboured under for fifteen years, inasmuch as I had as good health for above two years after, as ever I had in all my days.

After this, I and my fellow-labourer went on comfortably the remaining part of the year, while the

work of God prospered more than it had done before, in our time, in the isle of Cale. For many of the offenders were deeply humbled before God for the scandal they had brought upon His cause, repented heartily for the breach of His holy law, made all the restitution they could to the people they had injured, and therefore were admitted into the society again.

What was very remarkable, there were some who never belonged to us (only as hearers) that desired to make restitution with our people, being induced thereto by our preaching.

Some time after I wrote to Messrs. Robinson and Chorley the whole state of the case, and desired to know with whom I was to deposit what was restored. They wrote me a very polite and Christian letter, and directed me where to send the effects, and empowered me to allow the people salvage for their trouble; (but this I never did, because they had stolen the goods;) and congratulated me upon being connected with a people so open to conviction. I also heard that several gentlemen in the neighbourhood remarked, that the Methodist preachers had proved themselves honest men; and said, if the ministers of every persuasion had acted as they did, most of the goods might have been saved. Thus we see our God can defeat Satan's boldest designs, by causing all to end in His glory.

I was next appointed to Belfast, where I continued till March, when Mr. Wesley was kind enough to remove me at my own request to Londonderry again. I shall ever feel gratitude for his great tenderness to me in that removal, and to Mr. Rutherford for changing with me so readily. But I stayed three weeks at Coleraine before I went to Derry, and found a blessed increase of the work of God; for it

was at that time the best-disciplined and most lively society I ever saw before or since. And no wonder ; for it had been blessed with two good men, (Messrs. Rutherford and Moore,) and indeed most of the society had drunk into their spirit.

From thence I removed to Derry, and was received by my old friends with much love. I continued there till about a month before Conference, when Mr. Wesley was pleased to direct me to go to Dublin with all speed, to supply Mr. Boardman's place, who was gone to England. Soon after I came, my uncle Miller, (with whom I had lived thirteen years,) being very ill, desired much to see me, and procured a letter to be sent to Mr. Wesley, requesting that he would send for me, that he might see me before he died. Mr. Wesley was so kind as to comply with his request, and accordingly wrote to me, to be in Bristol the Saturday before Conference.

At that Conference I was appointed for Brecon. When I came thither I found my uncle recovering, who rejoiced to see me, as did also all the family and my religious friends ; yea, all my acquaintances in the town seemed glad to see me. But I was a good deal grieved all this year, to see so little fruit of our labours ; though, blessed be God, there was some.

In February I met with a great deliverance as I was going into Radnorshire. As I passed over the mountains beyond Pains-Castle, it snowed very hard. When the snow ceased, a thick mist came on, and soon after a very dark night. In these circumstances I expected nothing but to perish before the morning ; as the snow had filled up all the roads, and as I was afraid the fog would bewilder me. Going on, I soon lost my road, and found myself among a number of turf-pits. In this situation I

looked up to God for direction. Presently I recollected that the wind was west when I came up the hill; and knowing that my course was near north, and that there was a valley lying east and west, about two miles to the northward, I resolved to shape my course by keeping the wind upon my left cheek. Being rather afraid lest the wind should change, I looked up and left that to God. As I could not see twice the length of my horse, I was in great danger of falling into the turf-pits. Nevertheless I went on, trusting in God, and was kept happy in my soul. Having travelled a long time in the dark, I at last saw a star through the fog, and judged that the valley was near; and in a short time I found it to be the case, to my very great comfort, and, through the mercy of God, I entered it, and so got safe to B. Griffith's about half past seven o'clock.

The June following, Mr. R——, of Caresoos, related a remarkable instance of the power of religion. About a week before that, there had been in that neighbourhood the most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, hail and rain, that ever had been seen there by the oldest man living. Indeed I never before saw such horrid devastations in roads, hedges, fields, gardens, and houses, and hope never shall again till the general dissolution of all things. But, as it was then so well described in all the public papers, and repeated in most of the parish-churches, in a brief for the poor sufferers, it must be well known to all people; and therefore I need not mention the particulars here. But the circumstance I am going to relate was this: Six or seven people belonging to Mr. Rowland's society were assembled together for prayer, in a house by the side of a river which falls into the Severn at Caresoos. All of a

sudden the river rose and overflowed all the banks. The house was built of timber, and was soon swept away, with all the people who were in it, except one young man who got upon the top of the chimney, which was of brick. The neighbours, seeing him in this situation, came to the water-side; but, having no boat in all the neighbourhood, they could yield him no relief. Though there was nothing before him but certain death, for the waters kept rising very fast, yet he continued singing and shouting in Welsh, with all his might, *Glogoniant! Glogoniant!* that is, "Glory," till a large piece of timber (a wreck of a bridge that was carried off) struck against the building, and dashed it to pieces, on which he fell into the water, and followed his companions into a blessed eternity. But before he fell he told the people on the shore, that all his companions went off praising God in like manner.

At our next Conference, in 1781, I was appointed for Lynn Circuit. This year I was exceedingly happy in my partner, Mr. Button, and promised myself a comfortable time; but the Lord knew what was best for me. For on October 10th I was seized with a violent bilious fever. It was eighteen days before I was deemed out of danger; during which time I was thrice thought to be dead by all who saw me, and was actually once deprived of all sensation for six minutes; but God restored me, and gave me much patience and a great sense of His love.

Sending for the minister of the parish, Mr. Crofts, he came; on which my soul was much refreshed. When I had an interval of ease, so that I could bear to sit up, I sent for him again to administer the Lord's supper to me. Many of our friends attended, and we all felt the Divine presence in that

blessed ordinance. After this he came often to see me; and when I was able to sit up, he would stay some time with me, and often pressed me to send to the parsonage-house for anything I desired. But though I never sent for anything, as I needed nothing, he often sent what he thought was proper for me. May God reward him for his kindness to one who was near four hundred miles from his father's house!

Here also I saw the wonderful goodness of God, in afflicting me in the most convenient place in all the Circuit. For Mr. and Mrs. Parker spared no pains or expense in providing everything convenient for me; and Mr. and Mrs. Stead, at whose house I lay, devoted all their time unto me, and cheerfully ran the risk of catching the disorder, by attending me all the day-time.

When I began to get better, and was able to converse, I spoke often to my doctor of the things of eternity. He was an elderly man, and of good report in the town. I had a particular love for him, on account of the great attendance he gave me, visiting me five times a day, though he was much employed among other patients. About the time he had done with me he was taken ill himself, and soon after died. His nurse, one of those who were with me, sent me word that she hoped my conversation and prayers were not lost upon him.

As soon as I was able I went to Lynn; but, having begun preaching too soon, I got a severe return of my disorder. I stayed there till Christmas, and found I could not recover in that bad air. I then wrote to Mr. Wesley, representing my situation in full, and the state of the Circuit, which had suffered greatly on account of having but one travelling

preacher. He kindly invited me to come to London without delay, if I was able; adding, "Here you can have the best medical advice in the kingdom." He then sent me money enough to bear my expenses, which was very seasonable, as I was run very low by a long doctor's bill, &c., which the Circuit was not able to discharge.

When I was coming away, a gentleman of Lynn was so kind as to take me five-and-twenty miles in his own chaise, the day before the coach came in, to try if I could bear the journey, as well as to take off some of the fatigues of the first day. Accordingly, through the help of God, I arrived in London with very little difficulty. When I came to the Foundery, Mr. Wesley and all the family received me with the greatest tenderness. I indeed found it a house of mercy to me in my weak state. For Mr. and Mrs. Bradford, who had the management of the house, took the greatest care of me. In a few days, Mr. Wesley sent me to Dr. L[etsome], who presently finding out my case, I recovered wonderfully under his hands. But about the latter end of February, the winter set in very severe, and gave me a violent relapse into the fever. I began to recover again in about three weeks, but a cough and feverish habit remained all the spring and summer.

In June, Mr. Wesley sent Dr. C[oke] to Dublin, and some of our friends thought that such a journey would do me good. Accordingly we set off, and on our landing in Ireland I was rather better; and continued tolerably well all the time I was there, which was about three weeks. For two or three days after I returned to London, I could not discern whether the journey had done me good or harm, as I had been very sick at sea, and came from Liverpool

to London without being in bed. But when the fatigue was over, it was visible to all who saw me, that it had done me good ; yet I was not so well as to be able to take a Circuit. When I mentioned this to Mr. Wesley, he judged it best for me to continue in London, that I might be under his eye, as well as near Dr. L[etsome].

Soon after Conference we began to meet the classes, which I found very fatiguing to my body. As soon as we had done this, we entered on a more laborious task ; namely, visiting those in their own houses who had not met their classes the last quarter. Before we had quite gone through this business, I was again seized with a fever, and continued very ill for near three weeks ; at the end of which I began to recover again. Before this I was above three months not able to preach ; but now the Lord so strengthened me that I could preach two sermons on the Sabbath, and one in the middle of the week, without the least hurt.

When I was at the worst, many of my friends, who lived a little way in the country, kindly invited me to visit them for the benefit of the air. I gladly accepted of their offers, and lived among them as much as I possibly could, varying the scene as I felt myself affected. This was the principal means of my recovery this time ; for the doctors advised me to take but little medicine.

At present I am astonished at the infinite goodness of God, in raising me up so many friends in my time of sickness. I receive it as a pledge of His love, and am enabled to believe that He will always provide for me. If I should be advised to remove to my native air, for the confirmation of my health, I have several open doors. Two gentlemen in particular, in

two different counties, have lately given me pressing invitations to come and live with them as long as I find it needful. But as I am now able to do a little, I am inclined to stay in the Circuit, if I can ; but if it is judged better for me to remove into my native air, I am resigned.

During my last confinement I was wonderfully supported ; for though the enemy tempted me sore at times, yet he gained no advantage over me. I was often tempted to murmur at my being obliged to drag on so heavily ; but I was enabled to be resigned to the will of God, knowing that I was His prisoner.

I often thought with great comfort on what Mr. Charles Wesley said about a year ago : “ Young and healthy Christians are generally called to glorify God by being active in doing His will ; but old and sick Christians in suffering it.” Lord, let me but glorify Thee, and choose Thou the manner ! only give me strength, and I will bless Thy name.

I bless my kind Redeemer that He has given me full confidence that He will not remove me hence till I am made ready. And I am firmly persuaded that it is the privilege of all that are born of God, to be saved from all sin, and to live in the full enjoyment of the love of God ; and that this salvation is necessary in order to our entering into the kingdom of heaven. I hope He will soon accomplish this great work in me, that I may be wholly His, in heart and in life, in time and to all eternity.

JOHN PRICKARD.

MR. ATMORE says, speaking of Mr. Prickard, “ It was not long before he was made a partaker of this

hope, in the completest sense; and he soon finished his course with inexpressible joy."

It does not appear that any account of Mr. Prickard's death was ever published. In the Minutes of the Conference of 1784, in answer to the usual question, "Who have died this year?" the following character is given of him:—"John Prickard, a man thoroughly devoted to God, and an eminent pattern of holiness."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JONATHAN MASKEW.

BY JOHN GAULTER.

I HAVE always considered it as a reflection on our Connexion that so many of the first preachers among the Methodists have passed without notice into the grave. Almost every circumstance of their history is important, as the fathers and founders of many of our societies. If this is neglected much longer, it will be almost impossible to preserve anything interesting of their experience, labours, and usefulness; as their friends, and children in the Gospel, from the lapse of time, are fast moving off the stage of life. We know their names, a few places of action, and we see the fruits of their labours; but we want more positive information relative to men, to whom, under God, we are so much indebted.

We see men every day registering their infamy, and perpetuating their crimes, by publishing them; and the press groaning under a weight of biography that, it is to be wished, for the happiness of the world, will only furnish materials for the fire, or habitations for the worms. And shall we not be as

zealous to be useful, as they are to disseminate the most noxious principles, in bringing from the unworthy obscurity in which they have been too long concealed, those excellent men who counted not their lives dear, that they might preach the Gospel, and spread the knowledge of vital religion? With this view I have collected this imperfect account of a man but little known in the world, or among the Methodists. The sources of my information were his children and neighbours, and the society to which he belonged. In his lifetime he certainly stood high in their opinion for singular seriousness and invariable steadfastness, who, if not flattered by popular admiration as a preacher, was justly esteemed for undiminished zeal and continued love, in the service of his Master and the church of God, until the frost of time had honoured with hoar his head, and nature sunk into the grave.

JONATHAN MASKEW, the subject of this short memoir, was born near Bingley, in Yorkshire, in the year 1713. It would appear, from his confined education, that his parents were far from being opulent; and it is probable, it was with difficulty they supported the expense of his learning, in the little he acquired, which was not much more than reading and writing; and whatever were his future acquisitions in letters and knowledge, it is to be ascribed more to his own industry, than to original instruction. At school he was expert in every childish folly, and among the boys an example and leader in mischief; but this was not, as he declared, without a conscience tortured with fear and alarm, and haunted with the dread of the Divine displeasure. From his earliest recollection he was conscious of

the workings of the Spirit of God on his mind, and in the midst of the follies of his youth, the struggle against his natural corruptions, though feeble, and generally ineffectual, was continued. There are few who have experienced the power of godliness who cannot readily recur to the first impressions of Divine influence. These generally occur in early life, when the passions, following the impulse of temptation, captivated by the allurements of pleasure, meet a check from the convictions of conscience and the illuminations of grace. It is then that the struggle begins. Our fallen spirits rise in enmity to the Divine law, and attempt to cast off all subjection to the authority of God. We refuse to hearken to the voice of the charmer, stopping the ear, and making the heart* hard as adamant; persisting in sin, we fly the accusing conscience, "and dread no witness like upbraiding thought." Mr. Maskew, at the time the work of grace commenced in his mind, which led to his conversion, was without those aids of instruction with which thousands are now blessed. The serious preaching of the Gospel, at this period, was much on the decline. In many parts of the nation it was so universally exploded and dreaded as enthusiastical, that a species of morality little superior to that taught in the schools of Greece and Rome was the fashionable Christianity of the day.

The Puritans, those venerable promoters and examples of holiness in the pulpit and in private life, who, by an arbitrary stretch of authority, had been silenced, left but few such successors in the Church. Party rage, the example of a licentious prince,† a corrupt court, and the wit of a burlesque poet,‡ had

* See Zech. vii. 11, 12. † Charles II. ‡ Butler.

nearly with them banished all evangelical principles and awakening preaching.

Dark as was that day, the light of genuine truth was not totally extinguished: a few obscure clergymen, and the successors of the ejected ministers, unawed by the fear of man, and untainted by prevailing error, still maintained the simplicity of the Gospel, and preached the doctrines of justification by faith, and the necessity of regeneration. Although it was Mr. Maskew's misfortune to be unacquainted with those men, or the truths which they preached, yet he was not without many helps, which, in countries not professing the Christian religion, are neither found nor expected: he could read the word of truth, and hear a liturgy in which are the doctrines of Christ. But it was not to these, however useful and necessary, that he principally owed his convictions, but to the Spirit of God, that Spirit which was to convince of sin. It has been already noticed, that his mind felt the pangs of early awakenings, and the struggle between nature and grace. Though this was the case, through the force of temptation, and the influence of corrupt example, he fell into those sins which made him insensible of danger, and brought on a guilty stupor of conscience. But the conscience of man is ever accessible to God: He

"Can rouse her from her formidable sleep,
And bid her dart her raging talons deep."

That merciful Being, who wills not the final misery of His creatures, followed him with the calls of His grace; for, on the commission of sin, his imagination was frequently terrified by the just expectation of everlasting misery. Sleep forsook his eyes, and life itself became a burden. In fields, and unfre-

quented places, he sowed the bitter tears of his sorrow, and groaned out the remorse of his soul. Having no instructor, at every point his prospects were dark. He had formed the most erroneous conceptions of the Deity; for he considered His justice as almost necessarily engaged to inflict future misery on his soul; and such was the state of his knowledge, that gloomy and dishonourable ideas of God had nearly deprived him of his reason. The only suspension he found was in the intervals in which he was forming resolutions of reform and amendment, hoping to satisfy for the past by the future rectitude of his behaviour. But like those remedies which, applied to the natural diseases of men, failing in effect, only inflame and aggravate the disorder; so on the failure of his scheme of relief, his mind was wrought to the highest pitch of despondence and desperation. It is not possible, from the character of God, to suppose that a soul under the impression of guilt, and struggling (although in the dark) to know, love, and serve Him, to give up sin, and become the servant of righteousness, however for a time he might be ignorant of the truth, could finally plunge into misery. We may say of such, with a little variety in the application, what St. Ambrose, one of the fathers of the fourth century, said to Monica, the celebrated mother of Augustine, on her pressing him to exert his influence and abilities for the conversion of her son. "Go thy way," said he, "compose thyself; for it is not possible that a son of such tears should perish." These observations receive confirmation by his experience; for, according to the best information which I have been able to procure, he did not continue long in this deplorable wretchedness, and lamentable igno-

rance of the way of salvation. By degrees the truth dawned upon his mind, and at last he fully saw the Divine method of salvation. It should be remembered, that this was not effected by any known human means, nor by the people with whom he was afterwards connected, for their persons and doctrines were at that time unknown to him, but by the good providence of God, and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Light begets light; the Scriptures opened their heavenly doctrine and holy consolations on his mind; he saw that God had laid help upon One who is mighty; that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them who believe; that there is a kingdom of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost formed in the heart of the Christian; that the Gospel warrants the enjoyment of all its mercies to them who repent, and believe in Jesus. Hope sprung up in his soul. He cried, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" As he cried, the rays of approaching mercy began to illuminate his soul; his gross misconception of the Divine character fled; he rested his guilty spirit by faith in the atonement of Christ, and found that invitation of the Redeemer, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," did not mock his confidence, or disappoint his hope. In a moment the burden of his sin was removed: heavenly joy, and a peace which passeth understanding, entered and possessed his soul. It was like the dew of Hermon, and the dew that descendeth on the mountains of Zion, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. Thus the gloomy and poignant distress of his soul ended in the knowledge of the Divine favour, and the clear discovery and experience, that true believers "have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins." For if

sinner are justified, it is because Christ has died, who entering into the holy place, His blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Then He turneth aside the demands of justice for violated laws, and answereth by the plea of His sacrifice; for He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. So that the Christian may sing,—

“Hail, mercy! triumphant goodness, hail!
Hail, O prevailing!—ever, O prevail!
At thine entreaty, justice leaves to frown,
And wrath appeasing lays the thunder down.”

The happiness and comfort he enjoyed in his “first love” continued for several years. He walked in the light, and had fellowship with the Father and the Son. In the fulness of his heart he often exclaimed, “O Lord, I will praise Thee! though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me.” His nights and days glided sweetly along, and the difficulties of his human course only added incentives to his diligence, and warmth to his piety. Fervent in spirit, he rejoiced in hope. Serving the Lord, by being instant in prayer, he could rejoice with them who rejoiced, and weep with them who wept.

There is nothing, in my apprehension, in the character of God, or in His relation to us, that makes it necessary that there should be such an inequality in the experience of Christians. That there is, will not be doubted by any who are acquainted with the Christian world. When we are first visited by Him who commands the light to shine in our souls, we have no forebodings of dark and cloudy days. Nor is it evident, from the Scriptures, that believers must of necessity lose their confidence, fall into doubts, suffer

an eclipse of their comforts, and be brought again to feel the misery of an absent God. The promises look back to a certain and continued enjoyment of rich supplies of the Spirit of Christ ; to a correspondency with heaven, through which the peace and love of God keep and regulate the heart. And it would certainly be an unjustifiable imputation of the want of omnipotence in the Saviour, to suppose Him incapable of keeping His children, as well as a daring insult to His perfections, who is the Lord and Head of the church. Certainly, trials and temptations, various in their kinds, to disturb the quiet of the mind, to divert it from the only current of its happiness, and the pursuit of holiness, will frequently occur. The rains will descend, the floods rise, the winds blow and beat upon the house ; but the Christian, founded upon his Lord, although there are fightings within, and distractions without, by looking unto Jesus, may go on from grace to grace, until he appears before the Lord in Zion. If, therefore, after our knowledge of salvation, we should again be brought into darkness, it is to be imputed, not to the Redeemer, whose willingness is equal to His ability to save us every moment, but to our misapplication of those graces which His blood hath purchased, and His Spirit imparts.

After Mr. Maskew had lived for several years in the enjoyment of his confidence, and an increase of union with the Lord, he fell into a train of temptations, which, not meeting with the resistance of experience, and gathering strength from continuance, deprived him of his peace and happiness. It does not appear, in the first instance, what causes administered to his loss ; but the recollection of this period of his life never failed to revive the ideas of departed

moments of misery and sorrow. His mind again became the scene of bitter distress. Carried away by a torrent of impious temptations, his heart indulged the most horrid and blasphemous thoughts of God. Distracted with doubt, he called in question His being, insulted His perfections, and disputed His government of the world. It was suggested to his mind, that the Bible was a work of human policy; that artful and designing men had imposed it on an ignorant and credulous world, to gratify their ambition, or to supply the lust of gain. When the force of these temptations had subsided; they were followed by others, if not of the same degree in impiety in their nature, yet they were no less fatal and destructive: for as temptations unresisted and unsubdued prepare the mind for future stings of conscience; so the enemy of his soul, to shut out every source of hope, and to prevent his return to God, harassed him to the verge of despair. He concluded that he had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, that God had given him up to the hardness of his heart, that his day of grace was over, that he should become the victim of that justice he had injured, and be passed unnoticed by that mercy he had slighted.

How long he continued in this state is not known; but it is probable, that not long after the attack of the last-noticed suggestion, the hope of returning mercy once more dawned on his soul. With better information than at first, with clearer conceptions of the nature of religion, and of our Advocate with the Father, he began to call upon God. The Lord heard him. He found his lost consolation, which, from that moment, neither the trials of life, nor the powers of darkness, could shake; and witnessed its triumphs

in the last struggle of nature. He cried out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercy." That heart which had successively been raised to Divine delights, and distracted with unbelief, was again the habitation of peace and happiness; and with renewed pleasure contemplated, with its accustomed confidence, that day when she should

"Walk with God,
High in salvation and the climes of bliss."

It is difficult to determine with any degree of certainty when he became acquainted with the Methodists. We find him early connected with that pious and distinguished minister, Mr. Grimshaw, of Harworth. For many years he was a part of his family, and shared his friendship, and partook of his bounty. It is said he superintended his glebe, and united in himself the servant and companion. At least, it is probable he was in some way or other connected with his affairs, as to this day, in Rossendale, he is best known by the name of Mr. Grimshaw's man.

As soon as Mr. Maskew heard of the Methodists, and had read their publications, he wanted not motives to unite himself to a people who preached the truths he experienced, and the doctrines he believed; and, accordingly, was one of the first members of our society in that part of Yorkshire where he lived. As his heart was now filled with love to God, and zeal for His cause, it will not appear extraordinary, if we find him exhorting his neighbours and friends to "flee from the wrath to come." This was the case first in the neighbourhood where he

resided, and, in consequence of the spread of Methodism, in various parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire. The unction of his word, and the warmth of his address, are well remembered, when in the vigour of life, fearless of danger, the inclemency of seasons, and in the midst of violent and barbarous persecutors, he preached the Gospel of Christ. And there are several, now living ornaments of their profession, who were the early fruits of his ministry, and the seals of his apostleship.

And here I hope I shall be indulged for a moment in a review of the first instruments which God raised up for the establishment and spread of Methodism. Most of them were unlettered, unphilosophic men; men who had not enriched their minds with knowledge drawn from the instruction of the learned, or the schools of science. Their preaching, simple and artless, not adorned by the flowers of eloquence, or the artificial powers of persuasion, captivated the attention of thousands. Numbers who had been a disgrace to society, as ignorant as they were profligate, were awakened to a serious concern for their future welfare, and, abandoning their sins, sought and found the salvation of that Gospel which they heard and believed. Converted to God themselves, they gave efficacy to the savour of their discourses by the active piety of their lives; and their glowing zeal for the salvation of souls was only equalled by their just conceptions of the doctrines of Christ. When I look round on the fruits of their labours; the number of our societies; the places of worship, which rival, for neatness and accommodation, the most admired structures of the Establishment or Dissenters; the number and abilities of the preachers; a Connexion embracing the opposite

shores of the Atlantic, and finding an establishment in the woods of America, and among the poor enslaved Africans of the British islands, and still spreading in different parts of the world; I cannot but think that man an infidel to the real work of God, and a stranger to the effects of grace, who will not confess that God was with them.

The opposition which the first preachers met with in their attempt to spread the knowledge of Divine truth is as well known as it is disgraceful to their opposers; and it would be well if, in times professedly more liberal and enlightened, the present preachers had not to complain of the abuse of power, and the spirit of intolerance. The liberty of religious opinions has been the boast and glory of our nation; but the history of Methodism affords examples which will lessen its claims, if not to laws which establish its freedom, to those entrusted with their execution. The injury which many of them have suffered, and the insults they have endured, not only from the mob, but from men officially engaged to protect and defend them, are a disgrace to our national character; and if the half was told, it would startle the humanity, and raise the resentment, of those whose principles are averse from persecution.

Mr. Maskew had not long been engaged in his Master's work, before he was marked out as an object of popular vengeance. In one of the towns where he had frequently attended, he was attacked by a rude and ignorant rabble, no doubt either instigated or countenanced by those who were called their betters. They seized him, stripped him naked, rolled him in the dirt, and carried their injustice to a length which had nearly deprived him of life. But this did not interrupt his labours. For his zeal,

collecting fresh vigour from opposition, and neglecting the timid counsels of fear, carried him above the dread of persecutors; and this notorious violation of law and humanity failed in preventing his going to that place where he thought his duty and conscience called him; till at last his enemies, ashamed of their conduct, or deserted by their supporters, left him to his delusions, that is, to call sinners to repentance, and preach, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Another instance of providential deliverance occurred one Sabbath evening after he had done preaching at a small village near Leeds. He had just sat down with a gentleman, one of his friends. While they were conversing, the house was surrounded by a daring gang of desperadoes. Determined to rid the country of these canting heretics, they came armed with sticks, stones, and a pistol; and, it is probable, had not God interposed, that night had ended his labour and his life. The gentleman, who was dressed in the canonicals of a black coat and a white wig, first attracted the attention of the mob. As soon as they saw him through the window, they cried out, "Here he is! here is the parson! we will soon do for him!" But they had neither calculated the merit of the action, nor the possibility of a disappointment. The evening, which had been remarkably fine, in a few minutes was overcast, and the thick clouds announced an approaching storm. A torrent of rain succeeded, with tremendous claps of thunder, and vivid flashes of lightning. The gentleman, as soon as the storm came on, opened one of the windows, and addressed them on the impiety of their conduct. But whatever might have been the eloquence of the speaker, the thunder and the rain

had more persuasion ; for they found no inclination to endure the severity of the evening, but sought a shelter under the neighbouring hedges. This was the moment of escape. Mr. Maskew and his friend seized the opportunity, and, preferring the violence of thunder and rain to the stones, clubs, and mercy of those whom the courtesy of our country calls "our fellow-Christians," attempted to reach a place of security. The notice of their escape was soon communicated to the mob, who pursued them with shouts, fired the pistol, and strained every nerve to overtake them, but in vain. From the complexion of the men, their threats and number, it is more than probable, that, had not the good governance of God interposed, they would have glutted their revenge with blood ; and these men, engaged in the service of their Lord, that night would have become the victims of an ignorant and brutal persecution.

How long it was after his beginning to exercise his talents as a public preacher, that he was called upon by Mr. John Wesley to enlarge the circuit of his usefulness, I am not informed ; but we find him employed as an itinerant preacher in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the year 1752. His plain and pathetic preaching was here generally acceptable, and useful to many. Before he left Yorkshire he had formed a strong and lasting friendship with the Rev. Mr. Milner, of Chipping, in Lancashire, a respectable clergyman of the Established Church. One of his letters to Mr. Maskew, directed to Newcastle, is preserved ; and, as it illustrates the high estimation in which he was held at that time in the Connexion, its introduction will not be considered as useless.

“CHIPPING, *November 2d, 1752.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“WHOM I love in the truth. Your kind and loving epistle I received the last Lord's day, and was not a little glad to find that you remember me in your prayers before the throne of grace. I doubt not but the work of God prospers in your hand, and rejoice to hear that as your day so your strength is ; that the more you labour the more you prosper both in soul and body. Verily, we may say we serve a good Master.

“You have probably heard of my being called before the bishop, for the high offence of letting Mr. Wesley preach in my pulpit. I came off triumphantly, and my adversaries had just cause to be ashamed. The bishop heard me with so much mildness and candour, and I told him so plainly and fully the happy efficacy and success of the preaching, even of the lay preachers, that I have great hopes he will not be an enemy, but a friend. Do you, my brother, remember him in your prayers ; that he may do the work of an evangelist ; that he may so discharge the office of a bishop as to receive an immortal crown of glory, when the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall appear. Amen ! That great and tremendous day will make awful discoveries. Then, I am persuaded, you, and such as you, will lift up you heads with joy, when many that now make a scoff of your labour would be glad to hide themselves, though it were under rocks and mountains. Indeed, my dear brother, I do heartily rejoice in your good success, and wish the pleasure of the Lord may daily prosper in your hands yet more and more. Well may the society flourish under your care, through the blessing of God upon your labours ; if you knew

what Mr. Wesley said of you, that 'ten such would carry the world before them.' I go on but heavily, yet hope, through grace, that I shall be found faithful. The last week I was with Mr. Grimshaw, who is full of love and life. We were both at Bolton with Mr. Whitefield, who endeavoured to be a healer of the breach. He spoke much to prevent the spreading of a party spirit, and I hope not without effect. We must allow him the praise of a popular preacher; and all glory be ascribed to God, who has given such gifts to men for the edification of His church! When the good providence of God brings you this way again, there are many that will be glad to see you. We have some that have found the precious pearl, and I hope many that are seeking earnestly for it. My last letter from my brother Nathanael makes me full of hope for him. He has often spoken of the serious weighty words you spoke to him. O, remember him and me in your prayers! who am your affectionate, but unworthy brother,

"J. MILNER."

Mr. Maskew continued in Newcastle until the spring of 1753, when he was called by Mr. Wesley to assist Mr. John Haughton, (then one of the travelling preachers, but afterwards a minister of the Established Church in Ireland,) in the Manchester Circuit. This order is the only scrap which has escaped the general wreck of Mr. Wesley's letters to him; and, as it is additional evidence of his usefulness and general character, its insertion will not require an apology.

"LONDON, *February 22d*, 1753.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I CANNOT blame you at all for writing to me,

before you determined anything. I believe your staying so long in the Newcastle Circuit has been for good, both for you and for others ; and you are still wanted there. But you are wanted more elsewhere. I do not mean you should go to Mr. Grimshaw's Circuit, (although you might stay a fortnight there, not more,) but to Manchester. I promised you should set out to help brother Haughton, as soon as brother Hopper could go to Newcastle. So that you are sadly beyond your time ; the blame of which is probably (as usual) laid upon me. Therefore, the sooner you are at Manchester the better. Peace be with your spirit.

“I am your affectionate brother,

“J. WESLEY.”

It is a circumstance well known to those who are acquainted with the early history of Methodism, that some of the first preachers either became ministers of the Establishment, pastors of Dissenting congregations, or settled among their brethren, where they officiated as occasion offered. Those who resumed their original employments saw nothing discreditable to Christianity, or degrading to the Christian ministry, in the humble callings of life, but rather an approach to the original simplicity of that Gospel which owes its influence in the world, and its successful spread to the ends of the earth, to apostles who could draw the net, or handle the axe.

Among many others, one of the principal causes which influenced this conduct was the great extent of the Circuits ; for, as the preachers married, there was an unavoidable separation from their families. A day or two, in six or eight weeks, and sometimes much longer, was the only opportunity which they had

of performing the duties, or sharing the comforts, of domestic life. Such a separation was disagreeable and painful in the extreme; and if it will not be considered as a sufficient excuse, it is at least, if not convincing, a plausible extenuation of their conduct. Mr. Grimshaw, whose laborious endeavours for the good of souls have been the subject of just admiration and merited praise, had introduced the preaching into a dark and ignorant part of Lancashire, called Dean-Head. The manner of its introduction was as singular as the event was prosperous. He had observed a respectable man of that part of the country frequently attend in his congregation. This person was only known to him by name. One day, without invitation, after he had done preaching, he said, "I shall preach at Mr. Clegg's on Tuesday next." He went, preached; Mr. Clegg and his wife were awakened, and soon after converted to God; a little society was formed, and the preaching in that neighbourhood continues to this day. The preachers in succession cultivated the soil which was broken up by the powerful preaching of Mr. Grimshaw, and for many years it had a regular attendance as a branch of the Haworth Circuit. Mr. Clegg's death soon followed his receiving the Gospel, but not without his witnessing its efficacy in the struggle of expiring life.

Some years after the death of Mr. Clegg, Mr. Maskew was appointed for the Haworth Circuit. In the course of travelling, an intimacy took place between him and Mrs. Clegg, which, ripening into affection, after consulting their mutual friends, ended in their union. After some time the concerns of his family obliged him to settle in a farm at Dean-Head, from which he never removed, until under the

weight of years he sunk into the grave. His secession from the laborious toils of an itinerant life was not the signal for indifferency or inaction. The love of ease, or of indolence, was none of his vices. His farm and family became a centre, from which his usefulness was extended in every direction ; and, although from his comparatively local situation, the benefits of his ministry were confined, his zeal, as fervent as it was holy, like the sacred fire of the temple, continued to burn. The farm which he occupied was surrounded by huge and barren mountains, whose haggard sides,

“Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn’d,”

appeared like the hasty work of the Creator, without the final polish of His hand. Over these dreary mountains, always covered with bogs, and frequently with snow, through roads at that time almost impassable, he continued to carry the Gospel of his Master into Yorkshire, Rossendale, and Rochdale. He formed for himself a Circuit, which he attended for several years, with the promptitude and regularity of his itinerant life ; and God continued to bless his soul and his labours. His piety was not less conspicuous : his house had its altar, and its God. Every day this apostolic man, with primitive simplicity, collected his family for the purpose of prayer and praise ; and, according to the testimony of one of his children, for thirty years this had seldom been omitted. And, I may add, if truth is to be collected from the united voice of a people, to whom his weaknesses and virtues were equally known, for piety, temper, and seriousness, and every ornamental excellency of the Christian character, it is not exaggeration to say, equalled he may have been, but not often excelled. Highly

as he was esteemed by the little circle of his friends, as his preaching, though useful, and often blessed by success, never rose to distinguished notice after he settled, this excellent man was almost unknown in many parts of the Connexion. But value and obscurity are not contradictions. Men of the first talents and unquestionable piety, for the want of those occasions which give celebrity to worth, have been but little known.

“ Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear ;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

From the first dawn of the Reformation, the Protestant world has been much divided. The questions of “ high predestination,” irresistible grace, freedom of the human will, general redemption, with their collateral subjects, have been debated with as little regard to personal reputation, as the spirit of Christianity. It had been well if the rancour of party animosity had stopped here. It did not. Instances could be multiplied, but one is more than sufficient. Forgetting the tolerant principles of that religion which is full of all goodness, the Calvinistical faction at the Synod of Dort, influenced by the prevailing politics of the country, and aided by the secular arm, drove the Arminians from their churches and friends, and devoted them to wander as the outcasts of society, in the neighbouring states, where, among strangers, they found a protection which they sought for in vain in their own country. Unhappily for the peace of many serious individuals and families, this dispute still continues. But, either more acquainted with the spirit of the Gospel, or happily deprived of the

power to coerce opinion, the contest is not now disgraced by the powerful arguments of confiscated property, banishment, and the gloomy horrors of a prison. If force and violence are no more, this controversy has not been purged from the envenomed bitterness of polemic warfare. In its late revival, men whose character for piety and learning should have restrained them from (to use no harsher term) the illiberality of personal abuse, which can never convince, but must always offend, have indulged it to an excess which knows no comparison, but in the practice of wretches who are a disgrace to the world: but "unthought of frailties cheat us in the wise;" and our expectations from the professors of a religion which, in its nature, is as gentle as it is pure, alas! for the credit of the Christian cause, are seldom raised without the certainty of a disappointment. Dishonourable as was the spirit with which the controversy was conducted in its revival in 1770, there were several exceptions. The most distinguished was the Vicar of Madeley; and the name of Fletcher is still pronounced by thousands with the mixed emotions of gratitude and reverence. This heavenly-minded man knew nothing of that spirit which makes "envy and malice its nourishment;" but while he combines the clearness of conception with the strength of argument, his pages are not poisoned with biting insinuations and direct abuse. To that species of argument which is no less than restrained persecution, he was a total stranger. Intrenched in truth, with the address of a skilful disputant, at every point he resisted error; and as he did not confine himself to the defensive, on many occasions he boldly attacks his opponents; but while he exposes their mistakes, he justly discriminates between

opinion and character, and, in language at once animated and mellifluous, combats their sentiments, which he considers as injurious to the cause of Christ, and "masked reprobation," but praises their virtues. He lived to triumph, and retired with honour from the field, carrying to his beloved retirement, not the reproaches, but the esteem, of the vanquished. This dispute found its way among the first preachers, at an early period of the present revival of religion. Mr. John Wesley believed, what thousands of us still believe, that God is loving to every man, and that He wills the salvation, and seeks the final happiness, of His reasonable creatures ; that His calls are not delusive, or subject to the control of a secret purpose, but as His Gospel is to be preached to every man, His mercy is as extensive as His invitation ; that His promises are for His people, and not to men who live in the practice of manifest impiety ; and that the foundation of our perseverance is not, that we have once known God, but our continuance in that knowledge, glorifying Him with our bodies and spirits, which are His. There were others who embraced an opposite opinion, believing the doctrine of the decrees, &c. Dispute ended in division. Separate congregations and connexions were successively formed, many of which continue to this day. Mr. Maskew had united himself to Mr. Wesley, and with him believed that the doctrine of general redemption was most congenial with the Scriptures, and every just conception of the nature of God.

But after he had settled, he began to dispute the truth of the doctrines which he had received, and what he had heartily believed became the subject of doubt. As his sermons were soon tinctured with

doctrines varying from those which he was accustomed to maintain, they attracted the notice of some serious persons of that persuasion. As their place of worship was not many miles from Dean-Head, and being in want of a minister, he was invited to take the charge of their congregation. This he accepted, and continued some time their pastor. But as his mind was still in suspense, he cried to God for direction. He searched the Scriptures, not to press them into the service of a creed already formed, but that his views might be determinate on the disputable subjects which employed his inquiry. One night, sleepless upon his bed, and weighing the arguments for and against those opinions to which he had found so strong an inclination, a passage of the Scriptures occurred to his mind with such light and conviction, that from that hour he reverted to his original principles, which he continued to maintain to the last moment of his life. The consequence was, an immediate change in his labours. He gave up his charge, and returned to his first friends.

From this time he continued to exercise his talents among the Methodists. But the shades of the evening at last came on. He began to descend the vale of years. In the enjoyment of a vigorous habit of body, he had been enabled to meet the sharpest blasts, in a country naturally wild and exposed, without feeling the inconveniences of more delicate constitutions. But years constrained him to relax in the prosecution of the only engagement in which his soul delighted,—the preaching of Jesus to a sinful world. By degrees he was forced to give up his attendance at several places, where he had been accustomed to preach for many years; until at last this man of God, for such he was, exhorted the

people in his own house ; and, when he could stand no longer, sat, and, while tears ran down his venerable cheeks, called them to partake the mercy, and wash their guilty spirits in the blood, of the Son of God. It may be said, almost without variation,

“ Of no distemper, of no blast he died,
But fell like autumn fruit that mellow'd long ;
Even wonder'd at, because he dropp'd no sooner.
Fate seem'd to wind him up for seventy years,
Yet freely ran he on ten winters more ;
Till, like a clock worn out with eating time,
The wheels of weary life at last stood still.”

For a few of the last months of Mr. Maskew's life, enfeebled by age, and worn-out in his Master's service, he was constrained to confine himself to his own house. The members of his class, and other serious persons from the neighbouring societies, were his constant visitors. But it was not idle curiosity, or a conformity to the common civilities of others, which brought them together. They came to receive instruction from a father in the Lord, and to see a saint dying, covered with the glorious prospects of immortality, and a confidence unshaken as the promise of God. To them he opened the treasures of his experience, and his union with God. At one time he would say, “ The day of our death is better than the day of our birth ; for it is not life, but death, that joins the dying believer to Christ. I am in a strait between two, having a desire to be with Him.” Again he would say, “ Death is a cure for all our diseases ; at once the aching head and declining body is at rest. The saint, like Noah's dove, can rest nowhere but in the ark ; and with their Lord the weary are at rest :” and would add, “ For me to

live is Christ, and to die is gain; the Christian gets more from death than life." At another time he cried out, "It is a blessing for Christ to be with us in life, but it is the top of blessings for us to be with Christ in heaven; for there we shall have an incorruptible crown, that shall never fade nor perish; and not only a crown, but a kingdom. But we must put off the rags of mortality before we can put on the robes of glory." And again: "The fear of death is gone: it is only a short dark road that leads us to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." At another time he said, encouraging his Christian friends, "What joy there is in heaven, when a redeemed spirit enters those holy mansions! Angels, archangels, Christ, and the Christian brethren who have escaped before, welcome them to the happy shore, no more to be tempted, no more to part; but

'Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.'"

These sacred subjects employed his conversation. He delighted to indulge in contemplating his own and the believer's triumphs. He would say, "O death, it will be the funeral of our sorrows. Did not David fall asleep? Did not Stephen sleep in the arms of Jesus? And is not Christ the first-fruits of them who sleep? And them who are asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him:" and added, "So far as any man trembles at death, he wants love; for love casts out all its fears; and it is no credit to our heavenly Father, that we are unwilling or afraid to go home."

He frequently exhorted those who were about him to keep up what he called "their private trade with heaven." For, said he, "A Christian can as well

live without food, see without eyes, or walk without feet, as live to God without secret prayer." At another time he said, "I have been in the service of a good Master for fifty years, and now I am more in love with His service than ever; and I see no need of altering any of the doctrines which I first preached, when the Lord called me into His vineyard." His love to the person and work of Christ was often expressed by the warmth with which he repeated His name: "O that name, Jesus! how sweet it is!" This was frequently his pulpit language, and is remembered, not for its singularity, but for the animated fervour which an old disciple felt, when he pronounced the name of the Friend of Sinners. If this is enthusiasm, it is so nearly allied to gratitude, that it is devoutly to be wished that every professor of his religion was an enthusiast.

Towards the close of his pious warfare, his soul was filled with more than ordinary comfort. He would cry out, "I desire to be dissolved, that I may be with Christ:" and, "Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." When his speech had nearly failed, a friend called in to see him: he would have conversed, he attempted, but it was in vain. But signs, looks, and broken accents explained the happiness of his soul. The last time, I believe, he ever spoke, he raised one of his hands, and, with a smiling countenance, said, "Look, James, look!" His son looked, and inquired; but he spoke no more. Surely there is some truth in that general opinion, that saints, in their approach to glory, have on earth a glimpse of heaven:—

“ The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven ! ”

A little after this he changed for death ; and on August 3d, 1793, in the eighty-second year of his age, he departed this life, leaving behind him a family afflicted with his loss, and the character of a useful and pious man.

Mr. Maskew was a Christian in whom there was little to censure, but much to commend. From a transient acquaintance, his seriousness would have been considered as approaching to gloom. But it is not from a glance, but a closer inspection of characters, that we form just estimates of their faults or excellencies. Although he did not rank cheerfulness among the crimes of men, yet such was his extraordinary and uniform gravity, that numbers have attested, what may appear a singular fact, that they never observed him to laugh. Yet, his countenance was not the index of a mind ill at ease, or overwhelmed with distress, but an interesting picture of solemnity and delight. He spoke, and acted, as in the presence of God ; and perhaps was one of the most serious men that ever appeared in the Methodist societies.

His conversation was as spiritual as his seriousness was remarkable. He possessed the happy address of improving the intercourse of friends to the wisest of purposes. God and His Christ, His manifold wisdom in the works of nature, His love to fallen man, the events of time, the aspect of seasons, uncommon occurrences, and the mortality of this life, were topics which he delighted to introduce ; not with that cold and barren indifference which is the mere effect of habit, but with a warmth

of affection, which at the same time interested attention, and promoted piety; so that his friends retired from his company delighted with his views of religion, and his zeal for God.

His tenderness of the character of others is as worthy of praise as it is of imitation. Although not insensible, that such are the imperfections of our nature, that in most men there is "something to blame, and something to commend;" yet he discovered nothing of that discreditable inclination which delights the invidious; who, more disposed to censure the defects than to praise the virtues of men, are at home, and only in their native element, when they can gratify the desire of scandal and defamation. Nothing was more averse from the principles and practice of Mr. Maskew than scandal. He considered such a character as unchristian and detestable, equally unacquainted with the spirit and letter of the religion of Jesus. Perhaps he carried this principle to an excess; for he was more inclined to soften than to expose, and generally extenuated what he could not directly defend. If this is an extreme, it is certainly the best, and is at least an approach to the spirit of Him who said to His disciples, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." But execrable is that man, whose luxury is envy and detraction, never glutted with them; the worthy and deserving are not sacred, and against such the most irreproachable character is no defence. Happy would it be, if the most marked indignation should collect on those pests of society; exposing, as examples of general contempt, the wretched disturbers of the quiet, and the destroyers of the peace, of innocence and worth.

In his life he supported an admirable propriety of

conduct. He was the same in his family as in the pulpit ; and the market and church witnessed a behaviour which reflected no discredit on the Christian cause. He was not under the influence of the smiles or fear of man ; for, as he never affected popularity, he had nothing to expect from flattery, nor to fear from contempt. He saw before him the example of his Master, which he endeavoured to transcribe into his life ; and if he was emulous of honours and riches, it was to be like Him, and to enjoy His grace. Whatever were his abilities at the commencement of his public ministry, in the latter part of his life, although loved and esteemed by those who, from their acquaintance with the doctrines of Christ, can distinguish between excellence and ornament, he seldom attracted general notice. But popular opinion of pulpit abilities is more frequently mistaken than correct. Comparative neglect, and real merit, are more generally united than admiration and genius. But his design was not to blow the trumpet of fame, but to preach the Gospel with simplicity, and to profit the souls of the people. This he did, in his plain, lively, and useful manner, which, applied by the Divine Spirit, was effectual to the conversion of sinners, and to the comfort of the Lord's people. His piety, commencing in early life, did not degenerate with the lapse of years ; nor was the seriousness of youth the precursor of aged impiety. The opinion, as false as it is old, that "a young saint will be an old devil," received no confirmation from his experience. On the contrary, as he advanced in years, he grew in grace, and the latter part of his religious course was more glorious than the former. That men are wicked in age who have been pious in youth, is as opposite to fact as to the Scriptures. The reverse

is the case. And so far from becoming vicious, they who have served the Lord in the vigour and strength of their days are, in general, the most uniform and honourable members of the Christian church.

An end like his was necessarily happy. His soul had long been accustomed to look on death without dread, and into eternity with pleasure. He delighted in contemplating the moment when his imprisoned spirit, freed from the shackles of flesh and sense, should enter his Father's kingdom. As he approached the completion of his wishes, his soul felt all the dawning transports of the ethereal visions, and Jesus, his hope and his salvation, were to him altogether lovely, as the world receded and eternity drew near. Just before the silver cords were loosed, and the golden bowl was broken, and the wheel stopped at the cistern, the placid smile of conscious victory illuminated his departed conflicts, and he passed into eternity, covered with the prospects of a blessed immortality.

It is no small honour to the cause in which we are engaged, that most of our brethren have met death, not only with unshaken fortitude, but with the most lively prospects of the fruition of heaven, and of seeing their Redeemer face to face. Nor can it be otherwise, when we consider His faithfulness who "loves them who love Him," and His attention who sees the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads: for

"He looks; unnumber'd worlds before Him lie,
And nature lives collected in His eye;"

and precious in His sight are the life and death of all His saints.

JOHN GAULTER.

ROCHDALE, *May 11th*, 1798.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. MATTHIAS JOYCE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in Dublin, February 17th, 1754, of honest, industrious parents. My mother, who was a serious woman, was born in London, and professed herself a member of the Church of England. But my father, being a member of the Church of Rome, got me baptized in that Church, and instructed me himself, as far as he was capable, in the principles thereof.

When I was a little more than two years old, my sister, going one night on an errand with me in her arms, let me fall into a deep window, where there was a great quantity of broken glass and other rubbish. Close to the bottom of the window ran a rapid stream, which descended from the mountains of Wicklow, and emptied itself into the Liffy. The night being dark, and I not making the least noise, she thought I was carried down the stream and lost. However, she brought a candle, and found me lying across a stick that was in the window; which prevented my falling into the stream.

When I was about eight years old, a horse kicked me so violently on my thigh, that I fell to the ground, and yet I received no material harm. And about the same time I fell from a high wall, but was not much hurt.

When ten or eleven years old, I was thrown from a horse on full gallop, but received no harm. When I was about thirteen, coming one day from a review in the Phoenix-Park, the road was thronged with horses and carriages. A man in a chaise called me from the other side of the road to speak to him. While I stood talking with him, a horse on full gallop darted against me with his shoulder, knocked me down in an instant, went over me, and left me sprawling on the ground; but, through the interposition of Providence, I was only stunned a little.

About the same time I was thrown down by two horses in a carriage, and was very much hurt; while I was down, one of the horses trod upon me; but the driver stopping in a moment, I had time to creep out of the way.

When I was about seven years old, my mother struck me gently on my hand for some fault I had committed; on which I called upon God to damn her. I was soon seized with conviction for this; nor did it entirely wear away for several years. While it lasted I was frequently so terrified, that I could not see how I could be saved; and sometimes I concluded I was born on purpose to be damned. But as I had heard among the Papists, that a child must be seven years old before sin can be charged upon him, I often calculated how old I was when I cursed my mother; and if I could bring my age under seven, then I felt some ease.

When I was about ten years old, one of my com-

panions and I made an agreement to swear no more ; and, blessed be God, since that time swearing was not my besetting sin.

When I was about thirteen, I was taken from school, and my father and mother being mostly abroad, I was suffered to range wherever I pleased. Accordingly, I spent most of my time with those who neither feared God, nor regarded man.

In June, 1768, my father sent me to Mr. —, upon trial, to learn the art of printing. Though, by this means I was removed from my old companions, I still retained my love of sin, and, if possible, ran into greater excess of riot.

As I increased in years, my pride and passion increased also ; an instance of which is as follows. One evening my master's son wanted me to do something for him, which I refused ; upon which he went and told his father, who, coming into the shop, ordered me to do it directly. I told him plainly I would not. On this he seized an oak stick, and laid it on me until he broke it ; but so great was my pride, that I verily believe I would not have submitted had I been sure of falling dead at his feet !

As I was very strong for my size, I was made to do the drudgery about the shop, such as carrying bundles of books to the inns, &c. My master's son, one time thinking to have some sport by raising my spirit, called me "Porter, porter!" I could not bear this. My pride beginning to swell, I desired him to let me alone ; but he would not. I then snatched a large pair of shears, and threw them at him ; but, though he was not more than two yards from me, Providence so guided them, that, instead of darting into his belly, they only went into his coat, and hung there.

In September, 1771, I resolved to run away from my master, and enter on board a man-of-war. About the beginning of December, one of the men complained of me to my master for idleness, for which he gave me a gentle slap on the cheek. My pride then got the better of my judgment, and I determined he should strike me no more. Accordingly, that evening I fled from the house, with a full resolution never to return. I wandered about the city for some days, waiting for a fellow-servant who was to go with me.

Having spent the last Sabbath in taking leave of my friends, I got drunk. Then I returned to the place of rendezvous, where my companion and I quarrelled; and because I could not get my revenge gratified, I drew out a knife to kill myself. But several persons being in the room, got about me, threw me on a bed, and wrested the knife out of my hand.

The next day, as we intended to set sail for Liverpool, my father and sister came to see me set off. My poor father wept bitterly, and said, "Now I am left alone. I have no one to be of any comfort to me now. I shall never see thee again." He was at this time above seventy years of age; but neither his age, infirmities, nor tears, could prevail on me to stay. So I kissed him, and bade him farewell.

When I was on the great deep, it was so exceeding pleasant, that I thought if I had a fortune, I would even then go to sea. After a passage of two days we arrived safe at Liverpool. We had not been long there, before my comrade wanted me to return; but I said I would not. That night we stayed at Liverpool, and the next day crossed the ferry, and went forward to Chester. But it being exceedingly dirty,

travelling was very fatiguing; so that I had not gone many miles before I began to be very weary; then, with tears in my eyes, I reflected on my folly, and wished to be at my master's again.

After a disagreeable journey of four days, we arrived at Birmingham. By this time our money was spent, which was doubtless a singular Providence; for if I had had money sufficient, I should have gone straight to London, and entered on board a man-of-war. At Birmingham I had a brother-in-law, of the same business with myself, who soon got me into work: but my comrade could not get any; so he was obliged to sell his coat to bear his charges to London. When we parted, we both wept much; but I never saw or heard of him from that time to this.

About the latter end of February, 1772, there came a countryman of mine from London to work where I was. I told him what I had done. He reproved me very sharply for it, saying I could never show my face in Ireland; for if I did, I must serve that time over again. What he said rested upon my mind, and made me resolve to return the first opportunity, and serve my lawful master.

Accordingly, one Monday morning, this man and I set off together for Ireland. He had fivepence, and I had threepence. We made the best of our way to Wolverhampton, where we got a shilling from Mr. Smart, the master printer. From thence we pursued our journey to Alberton. It was quite dark before we got there. We had a crooked dirty road, and could not tell where we were, nor see each other at a small distance; yet we urged our way till we entered the town. Here we got a lodging among a parcel of gipsies, and after some conversation

we went to bed, and in the morning pursued our journey.

The hardships I endured in this journey far exceeded all I met with before. We were brought so low, that my companion went to a farmhouse to beg; and, as he told me afterwards, sung a song for his dinner. But to beg I was ashamed; so I pursued my way, hungry and weary as I was, to Chester, and by this means lost my companion for two days.

When I came within half a mile of Chester, I sat down to rest myself. While I sat, my joints stiffened, and I became more sensible of pain. My feet also swelled, and my thighs were raw with walking. Here I sat, a poor forlorn wretch; without money, food, or any visible help. Nor did I know where to turn myself when I entered the city; but I had a hope it would be well with me when I got there. After some time I strove to rise; but it was with the greatest difficulty I got first on one knee, then on the other. However, by degrees, with excessive pain I got on my feet, and crept on. Just as I came to the river Dee, I saw a man with two pitchers of water, resting himself. I went to him, and asked him to let me drink. He said, if it was sack I should have it, and held the pitcher to my mouth. Having drunk freely, he asked me how far I came. I told him. He asked me if I had got any lodgings. I said, "No; neither have I any money to give for one." Then said he, "The Lord succour you! for you are come into a bad place; but come along with me." Accordingly, I went with him to his house, where he set before me hanged beef, bread, and potatoes; and made me eat until I could eat no more.

After dinner he went with me to look for work.

On showing me a master printer in the street, I went up to him, and asked if he wanted a hand. He looked at me, and seeing me very young, (being then about eighteen,) he said, "You are a runaway from your master; and therefore if I had room for ten men, I would not give you work." "O sir," said I, "will you give me something? for I am in very great distress." He answered, with a degree of sternness, "I will not give you one farthing." As soon as he said this, I turned from him, and was afraid to try anywhere else. On saying to my friend, "I will sell my waistcoat," he said, "Then come with me, and I will show you where you will get as much for it as in any part of the city." Accordingly, he brought me to a woman whose name was Reely, wife to Sergeant Reely, belonging to the Yorkshire Militia, who sold clothes for people, and got threepence in the shilling for selling them. When she saw me, she pitied my case; and when I stripped off my coat and waistcoat, she began to weep, and asked if I had nothing else to sell. I said, "No." Then she said she would sell it for as much as she could, and not charge me anything. She did so, and brought me three shillings for it. She also made me stay to supper, and washed my feet and handkerchief. She likewise cleaned my shoes, and sent her daughter to get me a lodging; and insisted on my having a bed to myself, let it cost what it would, and said she would pay for it herself. She also sent her daughter in the morning with my handkerchief and stockings, which she had washed, and gave me a loaf when I was going away, and charged me not to change my money until I got to Liverpool.

When I arrived at Liverpool, there was a vessel to sail the next day. Accordingly, I went on board,

with only tenpence of my three shillings left, which was only the third part of what would pay for my passage. With this I ventured on board, without any provisions, trusting to the generosity of a sailor on whom I had spent some of my money, and who promised, in lieu of that, to supply me with what food I wanted during the passage. Just as the vessel was about to sail, my companion, whom I had lost for two days, came on board; who, having earned something, had just as much left, when joined to mine, as made up the price of one of us.

We set sail with a fair wind, while the sun shone bright upon us; but we had not been long at sea, when a dreadful storm arose. The vessel was tossed about like a cork, and the sea dashed over it with dreadful violence; while the waves, beating against her sides, made a noise like the report of a cannon.

Most in the hold were much terrified, and a few were endeavouring to pray; while I, hardened wretch! was highly diverted. At last a great wave dashed with such fury against the side of the ship, that I expected it would be beaten in. The fear of death now laid hold upon me, and I thought it was time for me also to pray. I therefore crept on my knees into a dark corner, and uttered a few heartless petitions. At length, after twenty-five hours' sail, we arrived safe in Pool-Beg. What money I had I gave to my companion, to make up the price of his passage, and sent him to my father to come and release me. The captain kept me prisoner all night, and threatened to take me back; but my brother-in-law came down the next morning early, paid for my passage, and brought me safe on shore.

I was a month in Dublin before my master would take me back ; during which time I lived with my father. One day I met one of my old companions in the street, whom I wanted to come and dine with us. My father was not satisfied at this. Being highly offended, I refused to eat or drink with him, and so left him. He soon followed me, and reprimanded me for my conduct. I resented it immediately, by giving him impertinent answers ; upon which he grew very angry, and came forward to strike me. I stood up to oppose him ; being fully determined to give blow for blow ! I was at that time so inflamed with infernal fire, that I verily believe I should have done all in my power to have knocked him down if he had been permitted to come near me.

At last my master consented to take me home, upon condition that two persons would be bound for me in twenty pounds each. The bail being given, he received me again without an angry word.

After this I went on tolerably well for about a fortnight, till one of my fellow-apprentices gave me saucy language. As I could not bear it, I gave him a blow. He went immediately to my master, and complained, who sent up his son to know why I struck him. I sent him word that he was impudent, and that I would not take an affront from anybody. My master then came up with a large whip, and beat me most severely.

Not long after this, I took it into my head to run away a second time. Accordingly, I went twice to look for a vessel ; but the captain of a Bristol vessel that I thought to go with, refusing what I offered him for my passage, I gave up the thoughts of going abroad.

But though I was so far settled, I still went on in sin, and grew worse and worse every day. About this time I fell into the cursed practice of gaming, by means of a certain person of some note (now in eternity) who came to my master's. I remember, my fellow-apprentice and I had a great run of luck one night, when playing with my master's son. The next night he was afraid to play, and so went to bed; but I went to his chamber, and would not let him rest until he, most unwillingly, got out of bed to encounter me again. That night he stripped me of every farthing. I asked him to lend me a little to enable me to try my fortune again; but he would not. On this, I found as much of the spirit of the devil as ever I did in my life. If it had not been for preventing grace, I believe I should have murdered him.

To carry on this wretched employment, the aforementioned person contrived a ladder of ropes, to let himself and others out of a back-window in the night, in order to go to the gaming-table; and I was so deeply concerned in the scheme, as to drive in the hook, and go out first to try it. But the Lord brought about a discovery of the matter, which put an entire stop to it; yet not until my master's son lost about twenty-eight guineas, which were stolen out of his father's drawers by our instructor.

However, I continued to be led captive by drunkenness, till I threw myself into a pleurisy. Then I thought I should have died, and was in some measure convinced I was not fit to die. On this I resolved to reform my conduct if I recovered; but of turning to God as yet I had no notion.

As soon as I was raised up, and was able to go

abroad, I forgot my resolution, and as eagerly gave myself up to the service of sin as before; for, the second or third night after my recovery, I stayed out drinking till near twelve o'clock. My master hearing of it, said to one of the men next morning, "Why will you take that fellow out? He is but just recovered from a fit of sickness, into which he threw himself by drinking. I do not know what to do with him. Beating does him no good, and I am quite tired of it. I therefore give up all hope of his ever doing any good." And well he might, if there was no God; for it was beyond the power of man to turn the stream of my affections to that which is good. But God's thoughts were not like my master's: there was hope in Israel still concerning even me! For, notwithstanding my daring impiety, and repeated provocations, the Lord was waiting to be gracious.

In the month of September, 1773, and in the nineteenth year of my age, Mr. Wesley came to Dublin, when curiosity prevailed on me to go and hear him one Sabbath-day morning. As soon as I saw him, my heart clave to him; his hoary hairs and grave deportment commanded my respect, and gained my affections. What endeared him still more to me was, seeing him stoop to kiss a little child that stood on the stairs. However, though this prepared me for receiving the word of life, so great was my darkness, that I could not understand what he said; and therefore went away as ignorant as I came.

The next preacher I took notice of was Mr. Floyd. But I thought the first sermon I heard him preach was mere nonsense. However, I heard him again, and thought this sermon the best I had ever heard.

After this, I went every other Sabbath to the preaching; yet still I was led captive by the devil at his will: but though I repeatedly resisted the Holy Ghost, yet my longsuffering God did not cease striving with me. For, instead of giving me up, as He might justly have done, He deepened His work in my heart, and gave me to see, that if I remained a companion of fools, I must inevitably be destroyed. On this I resolved to quit them all; which resolution I was enabled to perform; and my fellow-apprentice and I agreed to watch over each other, and to reprove each other when we saw occasion.

About this time a providential circumstance helped to confirm my resolution of quitting the Church of Rome. I was one day in the shop while my master's son was turning over some old pamphlets that had lain by for years as useless papers; at last he picked up one which contained an account of the conversion of Anthony Egan, a Popish priest, in which he discovers a variety of tricks made use of by the priests to deceive the people. Annexed to this were twelve queries taken from the word of God, and proposed to the Church of Rome. When he looked at the title-page, he judged it would do for me; so, handing it to me, he said, "Matt, I will give thee this: it may be it will convert thee." I thankfully received it, and gave it a careful reading; the effects of which were,—1. A clearer discovery of the Church of Rome. 2. An indignation against those abominable tricks made use of by the priests. 3. A great contempt for a set of men who, to support a bad cause, were constrained to make use of such shifts, instead of sound argument. 4. A resolution to have no farther connexion with them.

From this time I was very constant in hearing the

Methodists, and walked more circumspectly than formerly. I was likewise more constant in private devotions, and had some small conviction of the necessity of a farther work. I also fled from my old companions wherever I met them, and felt an abhorrence to the works of darkness, and had a regard for the people of God.

Thus I went on till April, 1774, when, one Sabbath-day evening, as I was going to bed, I felt an unusual love, such as I cannot express, to the people called Methodists, and a strong desire to be one of the number; but I thought they would not admit me, as I was an apprentice. However, I said to my fellow-apprentice, "If I was out of my time, I would join myself to that people." He, being more acquainted with some of them, said they admitted apprentices. On hearing this I was glad, and resolved, without delay, to cast in my lot among them.

Accordingly, on Friday, the 6th of May, 1774, a day to be had in remembrance by me, I waited on Mr. Jaco, to receive a note of admittance. My fellow-apprentice (namely, Bennet Dugdale) went with me, more out of curiosity, than any real desire to become a member. Mr. Jaco brought us into a private apartment, and lovingly talked over the matter with us; then gave us our notes, saying, "The Lord write your names in the Lamb's book of life!"

A few months after we joined the society, all the men that were at my master's, together with their wives, joined the society; two of whom are gone into eternity, and I hope under the smiles of heaven. Most of the rest, I fear, have not adorned their Christian vocation. May that Divine Spirit who

subdued my stubborn heart convince them more deeply of the necessity of giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure!

I was two months in the society before I was thoroughly convinced of the depravity of my nature, and of the necessity of being born again. But one day as I was going up stairs to the printing-office, I fell on my knees to pray, (as I used frequently to do,) when the Lord appeared in terrible majesty, and Mount Sinai seemed to be in a flame. His voice thundered from the dreadful mount, and spoke in terror to my inmost soul, which made me tremble exceedingly. The Holy Ghost showed me the spirituality of the law in such a manner, that I saw and felt my inward parts were very wickedness. For some time I was quite dumb, and wondered that I was so great a monster! O, what heart can conceive the exquisite distress of my soul at this moment? I groaned, being burdened with a deep sense of the wrath of God! I saw myself just on the brink of hell! I thought I was undone for ever, and despaired of ever being saved! But what distressed me most of all was, my want of faith; for I thought I had not so much faith as the devil. In this condition I remained for some time before I was able to speak: at last I cried out in bitterness of soul, "O Lord, I went among this people to serve Thee better, but I fear I am worse than ever." Now Satan laid close and horrible siege to my soul, in order to destroy the good work which the Lord had begun. He injected the most dreadful blasphemies, even filling me with the most horrible and uncommon ideas of God; and urging me every moment, like Job's wife, to curse Him! Often have I concluded, and could scarcely persuade myself to the contrary, that I had yielded

to the temptation, and had really cursed God in my heart. O my God, Thou knowest the distress and anguish of my soul at this season ; and what strong cries I put up to Thee for deliverance. But, for wise ends, Thou wouldest not grant my request until I had suffered awhile. Yet, Thou didst support me in a wonderful manner ; in giving me victory over outward sin, in making my conscience more tender ; and in enabling me to form a determination, that if I perished, it should be in Thy service.

These dreadful suggestions, many of which I dare not name, not only haunted me through the common employments of the day, but also in my most secret retirements, and wherever else I went ; so that I have been constrained to entreat God to rid me of my life, and drive me out of the world. My flesh would creep upon my back, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation harassed me continually.

Surely I may as well forget my existence, as forget the misery and iron with which I was bound, and the variety of spiritual plagues that tormented me during my abode in the land of my captivity. And as I have found that telling my experience has been of use to some exercised in the same manner, I am not without hope that a particular but brief relation of the same may be of use to many more.

And, 1. I was almost continually tempted to doubt the being of a God. One argument the devil made use of to support his hellish doctrine was, that if there was a God, He would destroy me for my blasphemous thoughts. With this temptation I had many a sore struggle ; for I saw it was every way calculated to stifle my conviction, and kill my good desires. I therefore resisted it with all my might,

and cried vehemently to God against it. But Satan was resolved to dispute the point with me; for when I would retire in secret, he would pour in upon me like a flood, saying, "Whom art thou praying to? Surely there is no God to hear thee; or, if there is, He cannot hear thee through the thick clouds." On this I would be thrown into confusion, and immediately stop, thinking I was praying in vain.

2. Another of his temptations, which distressed me exceedingly, was concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, whether there was ever such a person in the world; and, if there was, whether John the Baptist and He did not make a league together to deceive the people. This suggestion wounded me to the quick. For so long as I was under the power of it, all hope of salvation was banished from me; because I saw there was no other way to be saved but by Him. But that text often lifted up my hands: "And, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him. And, lo, a voice from heaven said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

3. But then Satan attacked me most furiously from another quarter, saying, "How canst thou tell whether the Bible is true or not? Thou knowest not but it is a cunningly-devised fable to keep the world in awe." This temptation brought exquisite distress to my soul. But, on the other hand, I was the more stirred up to cleave to the Bible, and examine it closely, that I might be able to silence the enemy. And therefore when he tempted me to doubt it, I would take it up and kiss it, then put it into my bosom and hug it, and say in a quick and positive manner, "I will believe it! I will believe it!"

I was helped a good deal by reading a passage in a certain book; the substance of which is as follows:—"They were either good men or bad men that wrote the Bible. If they were good men, they would not tell lies to deceive mankind, by saying they spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and by saying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' if it was only their own invention. If they were bad men, they could not understand the deep things contained in the Bible; nor would they preach such self-denying doctrine, lest their own evil deeds should be made manifest."

4. At other times it was suggested to me that I had no soul; and that when I died I should be like the beasts that perish. This temptation afflicted me much, and cost me many a hard struggle; for, being extremely ignorant, I understood little or nothing about philosophical inquiries: yet I still made my request known unto God. At length I was led to consider the nature of my inward faculties; particularly my power of thinking. My thoughts, I found, were free and unconfined; that they could mount up to heaven, or dive into hell, in an instant; that they could with equal swiftness fly round the world, and as quick as lightning arrive at the spot I was in. I remember that one day, as I was walking with a friend, I was led to reason upon conscience when truly awakened; that it was neither visible nor substantial, like flesh and blood; and that therefore nothing material could wound or hurt it: that on this account it was different from the body, though dwelling in it: that the pain felt was different from that of the body when wounded; it being nothing else but condemnation for sin before God; whereas the body, being flesh and blood, felt

no such pain, because the pain of conscience is spiritual.

5. I was also tempted to doubt whether there would be a day of judgment, a resurrection, or whether there were any angels or spirits.

6. I was tempted to doubt, whether the Methodists were the people of God or not: for I thought they caused more disturbance in the world than any other people; and therefore I was nearly concluding they were all false prophets. Before the enemy was let loose upon me in the manner already mentioned, the preachers were dear to me; and as to Mr. Wesley, I thought I would be glad to be his servant, to clean his shoes, or do the meanest office for so precious a man; but now I seemed to feel no love at all to the preachers or him, and appeared to myself quite careless whether I was in their company or not. But the Lord did not suffer me to remain long under the power of this temptation; but banished it from me by the application of a text of Scripture, Acts v. 38, 39: "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Then I considered the Methodists as a people greatly persecuted by almost all persuasions, striving to extinguish the glorious light of the Gospel, which they were spreading far and near; but to no purpose. For instead of putting it out, their light shined brighter and brighter continually; and numbers were flocking to that light, that their deeds might be made manifest. Then it was clear to me that this counsel and work was not of men, but of God. I therefore thought I had much reason to praise the

Lord for honouring me with a place among His people.

Now while I was racked and torn by these horrid temptations, my convictions increased to such a degree, that I saw hell moved from beneath to meet me at my coming. And as all hope of mercy seemed to be cut off, and as I thought the God of love had given me up to be a prey to the devil, I said in my heart, "O, if I were even a devil, I should not be so much tormented in hell!" But though this horrid thought did not long abide with me, yet I so clearly saw that I was a hell-deserving sinner, that I acknowledged with all my heart, God would be just if He banished me from the glory of His presence; yet I found I would rather die than live any longer to sin against Him.

Time now was exceedingly precious to me; no moments were wilfully spent in mirth or trifling. I was in general as serious as death, and as solemn as the grave; and embraced each opportunity to call upon the name of the Lord. I also prayed out aloud when alone at my work, for a considerable time, and thought the time lost if anything occurred to make me stop praying. Thus tossed about as I was on the billows of temptation, and exquisitely distressed by heart-piercing convictions, I wandered about in the fields, and sometimes got into vaults and other secret places, to pour out my complaints before God; and when I have been going into dark places, fearful apprehensions would arise in my mind, lest the devil was in some hole or corner, waiting to carry me away. But, notwithstanding this, I went forward, kneeled down, and cried mightily to God, though my heart and my flesh trembled with fear.

At this time I sought after such books as explained

the nature of faith ; and when I met with one that treated on this subject, I searched it with as much eagerness as a man perishing through hunger would grasp at a morsel of bread.

Sometimes in the midst of my perplexity, not knowing where to find relief, I have been almost determined to go to the preacher, and ask him if he could tell me where or how I might find Jesus. But then I thought, As they are but men, it is not in their power to save my perishing soul. At other times I was almost persuaded to go and desire them to scratch my name out of their book ; for I thought I was the greatest hypocrite that ever existed.

But though I was thus led by the burning mountain which could not be touched, and through blackness and darkness and tempest, and often heard the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words, in a spiritual sense ; yet I still remained a determined enemy to all the works of the devil. I may say, through the grace of God, I kept from every appearance of evil, as far as I knew ; and if, through ignorance, I committed anything that my conscience afterwards reprov'd me for, I did not rest until I confessed my fault, though I have been often laughed at for my scruples.

The following is an instance of my openness of heart, and tenderness of conscience, at this time. I had now a great aversion to newspapers, though before that I was exceeding fond of them. But one day as I entered the printing-office, the men called me to them. When I went, I saw they were reading a newspaper. On this they said, " You need not fear to read it ; " so I looked at it, and saw a spiritual play-bill, if I may so call it, concerning the day of judgment, that was stuck up at Richmond, on the

King's birth-day. When I read it, I liked it exceedingly ; and as I had not much to do, I printed a few of them, in order to give away, without asking my master's leave, not thinking there was any harm in so doing. But one night, at preaching, as I was giving one of them to a friend, he asked me if I had told my master. I said, "No." As soon as he asked me the question, my conscience smote me, and I was filled with shame and sorrow. I returned home, determined to tell my master, let me suffer what I would.

All this while I had no relish for the pleasures of this world. My whole desire was to be alone, that I might, without interruption, pour out my complaints. The sighs and groans of my troubled soul were sometimes heard by others, who, though joined in the same society, often asked me why I did so ; and some of them could not help wondering at me. But, alas ! they little understood my conflicts : and perhaps it was not necessary they should ; as the Father of mercies leads some in a more peaceable and quiet manner than others ; though it is certain the spirit must be wounded before it can be healed.

After I had been about nine months in this condition, the Lord, in great compassion to my poor, afflicted soul, threw the Life of Mr. John Janeway into my hands. This little book was made a most reviving cordial to me, and proved like the wine and oil poured into the wounds of the man that fell among thieves.

The part which was blessed to my soul was a letter sent by Mr. Janeway to an acquaintance of his who was exercised nearly in the same manner that I was. For the sake of those who may be tempted, and

yet may not have Mr. Janeway's Life, I beg leave to subjoin an extract from it.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"You say that you are troubled with blasphemous thoughts. So then they are your trouble, and neither sent for, nor welcome, and so are not assented to in your mind. [Tempted soul, is this the case with thee?] What then shall we say of them? If they were your own production, your heart would be delighted with its own issue.

"Sure then they are the injections of that wicked one, who is the accuser of the brethren, and the disturber of the peace of the people of God. Doth Satan use to employ his weapons, but against those that he is in fear of losing? He is not wont to assault his surest friends in this manner. Those that he has fast in his own possession, he leads on as softly as he can, fearing such disturbances would make them look about them. But those that have in some measure escaped his snare, he follows with all the discouragements he can."

As soon as I read this the cloud vanished away, and I saw that those terrible blasphemies, and atheistical thoughts, under which I groaned so long, were the suggestions of the prince of darkness, and that I had no part or lot in the matter. When Satan found he was discovered, he fled, and my soul enjoyed a comfortable hope of seeing the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

The fears I had of sinking into hell were now in a great measure removed, and I could draw nigh to God with some degree of confidence.

For about a year after this, I rejoiced in hope

of experiencing the forgiveness of my sins, and of having the witness of His Spirit that I was a child of God. For though I could frequently rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and found the burden of guilt removed; yet I would not dare to say I was justified, though at times I was ready to think I was.

I remember one day, while my mind was strongly persuaded to believe I was forgiven, I went to the preacher in order to be certain of the matter. I told him my experience. He liked what I told him very well, but gave me no satisfactory answer. I said, "Well, sir, I believe the best way of coming to the knowledge of it is, to be much in prayer." He said, "It is:" so I left him as doubtful of my state as ever.

Some time after, when I went to renew my ticket, Mr. M'Nab asked me if I knew my sins were forgiven. I said, "No, sir." He asked me, "Why cannot you believe?" I said, "I feel so much corruption stirring within me, that I am afraid." Then he said, I was putting sanctification before justification; or, in other words, I was seeking to be made holy, before my sins were forgiven; but that this heart-purifying work began as soon as we were justified. I then thought I would begin to believe from that moment. Accordingly, I could soon say, with some degree of confidence, "Thou art my God." But my mind was more confirmed in this from a sermon Mr. M'Nab preached not long after, from these words: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." I thought he preached this discourse on my account; for I was much tempted to cast my little confidence away. However, though I was encouraged for that time,

yet, because I did not feel that constant joy I expected, I let go my confidence, and walked in darkness as before.

About this time there came a man from the country, an old professor, who was very fond of encouraging those who were of a doubtful mind. The first time he saw me at the preaching he took a liking to me, and in a little while we became very intimate. Our constant conversation was about religion; by which means he got some knowledge of my experience, and would, upon every occasion, be encouraging me to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Often would he say, "Dare you deny that Christ is yours?" when I was often at a stand, what answer to give him; being afraid to say, Yes or No, lest I should tell a lie. At length, as he and I walked along one time, he said, "I believe you do not doubt that God is able to save you; but you do not believe He is willing." As soon as he uttered these words, the power of God rested upon me in a remarkable manner; all my doubts and fears vanished, and I was filled with faith and love. I could now no longer contain; but immediately cried out, "O yes, I believe He is willing to save me! and I see so much love in His heart towards me, that I should be the most ungrateful wretch in the world, if I doubted of His love any longer."

Now my heart rejoiced in the salvation of God; being inwardly persuaded, that Jesus loved me, and gave Himself for me, and that my sins were all forgiven me for His name's sake. I could now say, "O taste and see how gracious the Lord is! Hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul: He hath brought me up out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay; He

hath turned my complaints into songs of thanksgiving ; He hath not only forgiven all my sins, but healed all my diseases : therefore doth my soul magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour."

For some time I walked in the light of God's countenance, and my mountain seemed to be very strong ; but Satan assaulted me again with redoubled fury, suggesting his old temptation, that there was no God. One morning in particular, while I was at the preaching, the enemy came in upon me with this temptation like a flood, so that I was well nigh overwhelmed in the mighty waters. I was so deeply exercised during the time of the preaching, that I knew nothing about the sermon after it was over. My friend who was an instrument of good to me waited after the sermon to speak to me ; and when he saw me, he asked how it was with my soul. I, being distressed in mind, answered him short, saying, "I am tempted," and so left him. However, that day the Lord appeared to my help, and delivered me. I think this was the last great conflict I had with the enemy on this head. It may not be amiss to remark here, that after this conflict I experienced such a manifestation of the presence of God, that I almost thought my nature wholly sanctified.

Soon after the enemy thrust sore at me from another quarter ; telling me that I was deceiving myself, and that the enjoyments which I experienced were the effects of a heated imagination. This temptation put me to a great stand for awhile, and almost prevailed upon me to give up my shield. But I thought I would weigh the matter well before I let it go ; so I reasoned in the following manner : — "The enjoyments I now experience make me

cleave close to God: 1. By praising Him for His goodness; 2. By delighting more and more in His ways; 3. By earnestly longing to drink deeper and deeper into the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus; 4. By praying that everything in me contrary to His will may be utterly destroyed. These are some of the blessed effects of the enjoyments I feel. Now if the father of lies can prove that these flow from a heated imagination, I will give up the point; but not till then. But I am persuaded he cannot; as it does not appear that enthusiasm has these effects." Thus being delivered from these two temptations, I went on my way with some degree of comfort, and had a well-grounded hope full of immortality.

When I was enabled to turn my face towards Zion, I endeavoured to give all diligence to escape the wrath to come. To this end I not only denied myself of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, but, in some instances, even of that which was lawful. It was common with me to fast twenty-four hours at a time; and once, from Thursday night until Saturday morning. Add to this, my eagerness to redeem my time, so that I could hardly bear the thoughts of going to bed. I have stood reading and writing, in the winter season, sometimes till two o'clock in the morning, till the calves of my legs were quite numbed with cold; and scarcely ever did I go to bed, until so conquered by sleep that the book dropped out of my hand. But though I was last in bed, I was generally the first up; so that I seldom got more than four hours' sleep. Five o'clock in the morning seldom caught me upon my pillow; for as I went to bed with reluctance, I stayed in it as short a time as I could. And whatever time I was up before the preaching, I employed either on my knees

or in the Bible, or in some other good book: add to these, hard labour in my business, deep thinking, much reading, fierce temptations, and a wounded spirit! All these together bore heavily upon my constitution, and so impaired my health, that I was filled with wind, and contracted a bad digestion to such a degree, that the food I took, merely to support nature, lay like lead in my stomach. At last I became burdensome to myself, and was distressed above measure.

But Satan, who always watches his opportunity to deceive the simple, took advantage of this, and suggested that I was a glutton, or I should not be so oppressed with my food. As I believed him, though I took care to eat moderately, and sometimes would not eat at all, I frequently concluded that my belly would destroy my soul. On this account I have often stretched myself upon the floor, and twisted and twined in pain, crying to the Lord for deliverance. One thing I remarked, that the Sabbath-day was the day of sorest trial to me: so that I have denied myself of all food the most part of that day, endeavouring, if possible, to worship God in spirit and in truth.

For nearly two years I was oppressed in this manner. And though I had frequent manifestations of the goodness of God, and could at times rejoice exceedingly in His salvation; yet it was, in many respects, a dark and cloudy day.

Meantime I was much stirred up to seek after that holiness without which no man can see the Lord; and I might say, with Jane Cooper, "that I seemed to enjoy all I wanted, while I pressed after that which I had not attained." Such sweet consolation, and glorious liberty with God in prayer, did I experience,

while I sought this blessing, that it was the very delight of my soul to be found prostrate before Him. But this holy fervour of spirit, and earnest longing for the full image of God, was in some measure cooled, partly by yielding to the risings of corrupt nature, and partly by the reasonings of an old professor.

The first time he opposed me was either the first or second time after I met in the select society. This glorious meeting, which was always attended with the presence and power of God, and was made as marrow and fatness to my soul, he represented as a most dangerous and destructive meeting; that it would puff me up with pride. Having a high opinion of his judgment, I was almost determined never to go near it more. But in the evening I opened my mind to brother Gibson, who urged me to meet again; otherwise I believe I should have wholly declined it.

Some time after, the Lord stirred me up again to seek this unspeakable blessing; when it was my delight to be found in the company of those who, I believed, had attained, or, at least, were eagerly pressing after it. I generally left them with my soul on full stretch for God. Yet, when returning from the company of these servants of God, with my heart panting after Him, some temptation would surely be in the way. By this means I have been often stripped of my happiness, yea, and pulled back when I seemed near obtaining the prize. This has often distressed me exceedingly, and cost me many a tear.

One who had entered into this rest lent me Mr. Fletcher's Treatise on Christian Perfection, which was made a great blessing to me, both in convincing

my judgment, and quickening my soul more abundantly. The part which was chiefly blessed to me was his address to imperfect believers, who believed the doctrine of Christian perfection attainable. One night, when my little family was gone to bed, I took up this book to read, and as I read I met with the following words :—" If thou wilt absolutely come to Mount Zion in a triumphal chariot, or make thy entrance into the New Jerusalem upon a prancing horse, thou art likely never to come there. Leave, then, all thy lordly misconceptions behind ; and humbly follow thy King, who makes His entry into the typical Jerusalem meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, yea, upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

And as I was at this time sensible of my pride and self-will, I said in my heart, " O, this is the way ! I want Him to come in His meek and lowly mind." I immediately laid down the book, and went to prayer. I pleaded with God, and put Him in remembrance as He commanded me, in a manner I never did before. " O Lord," said I, " Thy design in creating me was that I might glorify Thy name and enjoy Thee for ever ! Let me therefore, I beseech Thee, answer the end of my being. O, let me live to Thy glory ! Thou seest, Lord, that I cannot glorify Thy name as I ought, unless Thou makest an end of sin, and writest Thy law of love on my heart. Lord, hast Thou not promised to take away the heart of stone, and to give me a heart of flesh ? Hast Thou not promised to pour clean water upon me, and to cleanse me from all my filthiness, and from all my idols ? Hast Thou not promised to circumcise my heart, that I may love Thee with all my heart and soul ? O Lord, was it not for this very end that Thy only Son was manifested in the flesh, even to

destroy the works of the devil? to deliver me from all my inward enemies, that I may serve Thee without fear, in holiness and righteousness all my days? Therefore, O Lord, make this the day of salvation! Now, now, O Lord, let the work be done! Amen."

While I thus poured out my heart before Him, I seemed to enter into the holy of holies, by faith in the blood of the Lamb. My heart expanded to receive my holy Bridegroom, when He came, as it were, riding into my soul, in His chariot of love, with all His sanctifying grace. I could do nothing now but bless and magnify the name of the Lord for this wonderful manifestation. My only language was, "Glory, glory, glory be to God!"

What tongue can tell, or heart conceive, the heaven that was opened in my heart at that moment! It might well be called "joy unspeakable and full of glory!" After offering up my tribute of praise to Him who visited me in so extraordinary a manner, I went to bed full of love, of heaven, of God.

In the year 1780 my wife lay in, and about that time my business was so slack, that I was several weeks out of work; by which means we were brought very low. In this extremity a kind friend asked me how much would set me up. I mentioned a certain sum, which he offered to lend me without bond or interest, until I was able to pay him; urging, at the same time, the necessity of my entering into business, as I had a growing family. Such a generous offer surprised me; but I could not consent to accept of it until I had consulted my wife. Accordingly, that night I spoke to her; but she did not seem forward to embrace it. However, thinking it might be a call of Providence, I at length consented.

I then set about collecting the materials necessary for my business ; and after a good deal of trouble completed my design. Having procured materials, the next thing was to look for work. To this end, I entered into the company of booksellers ; printed large posting-bills and handbills in the most elegant manner, and had them posted about the city, sent to the booksellers, and dispersed in the coffee-houses ; but all to little purpose ; for in the course of about eight months I did not earn as much as would support myself ; and had it not been for what little my wife earned, I believe we must have starved. For, not making a proper estimate when my friend spoke to me, I was obliged to enter deeper into the affair than I expected ; which exposed me to temptation, when I saw myself, as it were, deprived of the means of discharging the debts I had contracted. At times, indeed, I could cast my whole care upon the Lord ; but then the thought, "How shall I get out of debt ?" would again perplex me.

At last, seeing it was in vain to continue in that line, I came to a resolution to sell all, and pay everybody as far as it went. Accordingly, I did sell all ; but most of what I had, greatly under the price I gave for them. I then discharged some debts I had contracted with those who either could not or would not bear with me ; and with the remainder I made my friend an unworthy return for his kindness, as it fell short upwards of twenty pounds of what he had lent me. However, he accepted of it, without troubling me for the rest. But notwithstanding he patiently bore with me, I was not satisfied. And therefore, that I might be the better able to pay the whole, I determined to go to London.

Accordingly, with a heavy heart, I sailed for Holy-

head, in company with brother James Martin, and brother Pilmoor. We travelled together to Chester, from whence they went to Leeds, and I to London. In this journey I endured much hardship; being obliged to ride almost from Holyhead to London on the coach-box.

In about three days after my arrival I got into work, where I continued for about a fortnight; but work being slack, my employer wanted to lower my wages. I believe I should have taken what he offered, only some men in the house had a guinea per week, and I thought it might hurt them if I did. On this, I made known my situation to Mr. Boardman, who advised me to return home, as soon as possible. However, that I might be clear, I inquired at several printing-offices in London for work, but could not get any; then I determined to go to Ireland with Mr. Boardman. Only there seemed to be an objection; namely, my want of money. But that he removed by bearing my expenses. While I was in London, Mr. Wesley arrived from the Leeds Conference; but I had not courage to speak to him, all the time he stayed in town.

In my return to Dublin, I was near finishing my course. For, going through Wales, I was suddenly pitched off the coach-box. But providentially having hold of the iron, I wheeled, and my foot rested upon the spring. I went off head foremost; and though the whole weight of my body was on my left arm, I was so supported by an invisible power, that it seemed no weight at all. I have since almost shuddered at my dangerous situation, when sleeping on the top of the coach. Surely it was nothing less than the Divine hand that prevented me from falling and waking in eternity.

When he came to Poolbeg, Mr. Boardman went on shore, and left the care of the luggage to me. But before he went, he employed an open boat, instead of the wherry, which was near costing me my life, and him the loss of his goods. From thence we sailed peaceably enough till we got between the walls of the river Liffey, when a wherry in full sail darted through the river the contrary way, and when she got pretty near us, the man at the helm tacked about, and ran her head against the side of our little boat; where her bowsprit came across my back, and pressed me down with great violence, while our boat was near overset: but the Lord brought me through this also, without receiving any hurt.

February 6th, 1782, one of the members of the House of Commons for the city being dead, and two or three candidates offering themselves, my two fellow-apprentices and I, being free of the city, were requested by our master to attend the corporation at the music-hall. We all accordingly met there with the three candidates, in the grove-room, so called from its being painted like a grove. This was over the ball-room, and supposed to be twenty feet high or more. Alderman W—— arose and spoke first; then Mr. T—— H—— made a speech. Then the third candidate, Counsellor P——n, beginning with a feeble voice, the place was all silence, when, lo! in a moment, the beam broke close by the wall, and the floor sunk, and about three hundred persons went down in an instant. I had just time to perceive them sinking through the cloud of dust which ascended, before I fell myself; but, as God would have it, no one fell upon me. My fall was upon the pit of my stomach, which nearly knocked out my breath. For some time we were so encompassed

with darkness, that we could not rightly tell where we were ; but the most horrid cries that could well be conceived were uttered by those whose limbs were broken. As we lay, not knowing which way to flee, some cried out, " Lie still, and we shall be all safe." I thought they perceived the roof giving way ; and as I was on the top of the rest, I gave myself up for lost, expecting every moment to be dashed in pieces. I lay as close as I could, patiently waiting my doom ; but finding the roof did not fall as I expected, I raised my head, looked about, and discovered an open window just at hand. I then arose ; but Sir E——N——, who was under me, cried out to me to take the boards off his legs, which he said were broken. This I did as well as I could, and lent him a hand to help him up. I then looked down, and saw my suffering fellow-mortals like drowning men, stretching forth their arms, and grasping at the first thing that presented itself. One of them caught me by the hand, and nearly pulled me down ; but I disengaged myself, and made to the window, where I had to help a man through, who had his foot broken, and a desperate hole made in his forehead, so that the interior part of his skull might be seen. After him I went out myself, and, by the mercy of God, escaped without a broken bone, or the loss of a drop of blood.

When I got out I seemed like one returning from the dead, or coming from the field of battle. My face was covered with paleness, and it seemed as if I had bathed part of my garments in the blood of the slain. I went over to Mr. Dugdale's ; but he not being come home, I thought he was buried in the ruins. So I went back to look for him, and turned over some of the rubbish ; but could not find him. In the mean time he was carried home in a

chair, with some of his ribs broken, and otherwise greatly hurt, so that his life hung in doubt for some time. While ranging about, I espied my other fellow-apprentice, not able to move, being greatly hurt in the thigh, and having one of his skirts torn off by something that caught him in the fall. Several others sat in the utmost agony with their legs and thighs broken, and otherwise shockingly mangled. Very few escaped unhurt more or less. Nine or ten, at least, died of the wounds and bruises they received; and others live disabled, to perpetuate the memory of this dreadful event. When I got home I was bled, and fainted away. My wife thought I was going to expire; but I soon came to myself, and in a few days was enabled to go to my work as usual.

This same year it was impressed on my mind, that I ought to give myself up to the blessed work of calling sinners to repentance. But then a damp came upon me, when I considered my unfaithfulness to His grace. Hence I was ready to conclude it could never be, that such a vile creature should be chosen to labour in the vineyard of the Lord. But, blessed be His adorable name! I can say, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." At first some objection was made to me, on account of my family. But about Christmas, 1782, I received a letter from Mr. Wesley, the substance of which was as follows:—

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Not only Mr. Smith, but several others, gave a satisfactory account of you at the Conference. Mr. Watkinson writes me word, that as Robert Blake

has left him, he is in great want of help. I have no objections, if your wife is willing, for you to go upon trial to Limerick.

“JOHN WESLEY.”

Accordingly, I began immediately to prepare for my departure. My Dublin friends assisted me very much; and on Saturday, January 11th, 1783, I took leave of my wife and child, my dear acquaintance, and native place, and with an aching heart set out.

I stopped at Naas to refresh myself and my horse: and, having a room to myself, with an aching heart I opened the Bible on these words, “Go ye forth of Babylon; flee from the Chaldeans, with the voice of singing; declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the ends of the earth; saying, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob.” (Isaiah xlviii. 20.) I reached Munstereven that night; but being much fatigued, I lay down with a heart burdened with inexpressible grief. But the next morning I arose quite composed; and as it was the Sabbath-day I rode to Portarlinton, and preached twice.

On Monday I left Portarlinton, and set off for my Circuit. On the way I was much tried with the severity of the weather, and deeply exercised about my call to preach. But I found a willingness to endure hardships, if the Lord would be pleased to make me an instrument of good.

My great Preserver conducted me in safety through hail, rain, and wind, until I got to Cashel, the first place in my Circuit. I entered the city in peace, and rode safely along, until I came to the street where I was to lodge. Then my horse suddenly fell. I was thrown over his neck upon my head, and dashed violently against the stones. Here I lay for

a little time, stretched upon my back. When I awoke I found no great hurt, though some who saw me fall wondered I was not killed. One of the drunkards of the town very civilly conducted me to my lodging; but the people of the house looked astonished at me, and did not seem well inclined to receive me; because, seeing me so dirty and in such company, they thought I had been drinking; but my guide strongly assured them I had fallen from my horse, which helped to gain me a more friendly reception. I thought Satan was angry with me; but the God of my life overruled his malice.

During the short time I travelled this Circuit, I had severe trials, within and without; but the Lord comforted me in all my tribulations. My wife was sick about five weeks, and was so forsaken by her acquaintances, that she might have nearly adopted the words of the Psalmist: "I am counted with them that go down to the pit, free among the dead." The letters I received from her in this dark and cloudy day were like the tidings brought to Job, one weightier than another. Yet I was enabled to lay the matter before the Lord, and found unspeakable liberty. No outward trials whatever were sufficient to shake my confidence. I was strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. O Thou God of love! Thou alone canst tell the happiness I enjoyed in Thee, while wading through the deep waters.

One morning in particular, while I was speaking from "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life," I was so filled with joy, that it was as if I had got upon the wings of an eagle, and was soaring to endless day.

But that which distressed me most was, my not having so many seals of my ministry as I expected. One day, while my mind was thus exercised, having the Bible in my hands, I opened upon these words, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain." (Joel ii. 1.) I replied immediately, "Lord, put the trumpet to my mouth, and I will blow it." That night I found a peculiar degree of liberty and courage in delivering my message to the people. However, nothing would satisfy me, but hearing the people roar under the sermon, from a sense of their misery; and, on the other hand, shouting for joy, through a sense of pardoning love. And as I laboured with all my might, and endeavoured to walk close with God through the day, I expected that it would be the case; and because it was not, (except in one or two instances,) I was almost ready to conclude I was not sent of God.

But though I did not often perceive those marks, which I laid down as proofs of my call to the ministry, yet I am now well assured I was doing the will of God, from the comfortable testimonies of the people at class-meetings and lovefeasts. And I think it would be well for every young preacher especially, to meet the classes whenever he can. Nothing has a greater tendency to lift up the hands that hang down, than to hear those who have sat under us relating the good they have received thereby. Another remark I would make is, that we are not to look upon all our labours as lost because the seed we sow does not spring up immediately, or, at least, is not made known to us at the time. God makes this known only so far as it is necessary to enable us to go on in our work with humble boldness.

In April I attended the Conference; and from

thence was sent to labour with Mr. R. Armstrong and Mr. J. Kerr, on the Balliconnell Circuit. I may say, we loved as brethren, and kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The party spirit which reigned throughout that Circuit the year before, was almost entirely removed. And some good was done to saints and sinners: we had therefore reason to bless God who did not suffer us to labour in vain.

The second day I travelled in this Circuit I was most dreadfully wet. It rained upon me for four hours, to such a degree, that the covers of the books in my pockets were stripping off with the wet. When I got to my quarters, I thought I should have met with sympathizing friends; but they seemed not to think much about me. I suppose it was permitted for a trial of my patience, as I found this family exceedingly friendly ever after. I dried myself as well as I could, and got some cold milk to refresh me after my toil. But I went to bed, slept most comfortably, and rose next morning without the least cold. After breakfast I rode to my destined place: when I went in, I could not see the face of a Methodist; which discouraged me much. After dinner, the day was very gloomy; which helped to depress my spirits more. I entered into a train of reasoning, till I came to a resolution to quit the work, and return home. Accordingly, I sent immediately to the field for my horse, clapped on my saddle-bags, mounted him, and rode off, determined never to travel more.

But I had a conviction I was doing wrong; and feared, as I was flying from the work, I should fall and break my neck. But so odious was the cross, that I had neither inclination nor power to resist.

When I had got about five miles, I met a member of the society I was flying from. The woman, though she never saw me before, without asking whether I was a preacher or not, stopped me, and said, "What is the reason you are turning your back on E——?" I looked earnestly at her, and said, "How do you know me?" On which she pointed to a young man, who told her I was the person he directed to C——n the night before. She then said, as if she knew my heart, "I suppose you do not mean to travel this Circuit any more?" I said, "I do not mean to travel at all any more: I cannot stand it; and therefore I am going home." Then I rode away from her; but my heart was ready to break with grief.

As I pursued my journey, I rode into Enniskillen to get a bait for my horse; but, it being fair-day, and the town greatly crowded, I, being a stranger, did not know where to apply for it. While I was looking about, a stranger, one of the society of Tonnelummin, came up to me, and said, "Sir, do you want anything?" I said, "I want a feed of oats for my horse." By and by another came up to me, and smiled; but I knew him not: however, I soon found he was a Methodist. This simple circumstance, I believe, was the appointment of Providence, as it helped to prevent my going home as I intended. After getting the oats, I rode on to Mr. H. D.'s, the general steward, thinking to spend that night and the Sabbath-day there, and on Monday to set off for Dublin. Mr. D. reasoned the case very much with me, to keep me on the Circuit; but I could not then be brought fully to consent. However, the young men of Tonnelummin persuaded me to go thither, where I preached twice that evening.

At last I was prevailed on to stay until Dr. C. came into the Circuit.

During this interval I had many deep exercises of mind. I could hardly look upon myself to be a preacher, and I thought it absolutely impossible that I should submit to travel. I was altogether unwilling to continue, and would have been glad of any pretence to return home : I almost wished for a rupture, or a broken leg, or anything that might appear a lawful excuse for it ; for I was afraid to go home without one. While I was thus exercised, I received a letter from my wife, encouraging me to persevere in the work of God ; part of which was as follows :—

“ DUBLIN, *May 14th*, 1783.

“ MY DEAR,

“ THE receiving of your letter gave me joy ; but on reading it, my heart did truly feel for you. Yet, on consideration, I think it is a good sign that the devil does so much strive to hinder you. He fears you will lay your shoulders to the Lord’s work, and his power will be shaken ; and on this account you may expect all the opposition that the prince of darkness can make.

“ Are you afraid of the devil, who is himself held in chains by your Master ? Is not God on your side ? Then fear not. This temptation is for the trial of your faith. The Lord will make your cup to overflow after it, and bless you in His own way.

“ I remain

“ Your affectionate wife,

“ ALICE JOYCE.”

I now wrote a letter for Dr. C., acquainting him with my objections against travelling. When I came

to Kil'eshandāra, I gave him the letter. He took much pains to remove my objections. At last I submitted for that time; but soon after the temptation returned with greater violence.

Accordingly, I wrote to the doctor a second time, requesting permission to quit travelling; when, getting another letter which encouraged me to go on, I found a willingness to sacrifice my all for the sake of the Gospel. My mind being once more set at liberty, I preached the next morning with remarkable power; and I believe not many of the congregation went away unblessed. From that hour, through mercy, I was enabled to devote myself fully to the work of God, and to endure hardness with cheerfulness. And though I had lived twenty-eight years and upwards in Dublin, I never, during my stay in the north, murmured at the hardest labour, or the coarsest food I met with.

My wife also endured some hardship upon this Circuit; yet she could not wish the cross removed. But what she wanted in temporals the Lord made up in spirituals. It was on this Circuit He graciously restored her to the light of His countenance, filling her with peace and joy in believing. Here also the Lord favoured her with the affection of the people; several of whom were grieved at her departure.

Upon the whole: I have reason to be thankful for my appointment to the north; and trust I shall never lose my affection for my dear friends in those parts, or the grateful remembrance which I retain for the many little tokens of love they showed me for Christ's sake.

In July, 1784, I was appointed assistant in the Athlone Circuit; an office I saw myself very unfit for. But I cast my care upon the Lord, and obtained

help of Him, so as to get through with satisfaction to some and profit to myself.

This year the Lord was pleased to give me favour in the sight of the people, and to bless me with success in my labours. He enlarged the borders of Zion, and made me willing to spend and be spent for Him.

In January, 1785, I went to Dublin, intending to stay about two nights; but I was seized with sickness, which detained me longer than I intended. I believe this was the appointment of an all-gracious Providence, as I experienced such a measure of Divine love as was beyond what I could ask or think.

After being in my Circuit a considerable time, the letters I received from Dublin, respecting the work, were so delightful, that I was desirous of seeing my native place once more. On my arrival, I found many much alive to God; by means of those men of God, J. R. and A. B., and that mother in Israel, sister R. I soon caught a measure of their spirit, and was stirred up to seek for purity of heart; and was not without hope of getting a draught of that water of life before I left Dublin.

The 9th of January, I was deeply wounded in my spirit, on account of indwelling sin. I saw it was like a flood ready to overwhelm me. I groaned to be delivered; and abhorred myself on account of it. That night I went and sat with S. R. and S. B., and we talked about Christian perfection till Mr. R. came into the room: it being late, he said to me, "You must pray for us." Being distressed, I said, "I want some one to pray for me." We kneeled down, and S. R. wrestled with God in my behalf. Yet I went home much oppressed, which was visible to all. One asked me if anything was the matter?

I was unwilling to tell ; but on their pressing me, I told them, my carnal mind was the cause. After family prayer, I entered my chamber, and stood awhile leaning against the wall. The language of my heart was, "Lord, I am nothing ! Lord, I am nothing !" After which I went to prayer, and, in a moment, found power to obey that command, "My son, give Me thy heart."

I then arose from my knees, and went to bed in peace, praising the Lord for all His goodness. Notwithstanding this change, I was afraid to speak in a positive manner what the Lord had done for me. I walked in the light, with my heart full of love to God. After my departure from thence I wrote to S. R. as follows:—

"ATHLONE, *January 31st, 1785.*

"FIRST. In my former state, though often deeply distressed on account of my depravity, yet I could not freely part with all ; so that when I prayed against this or that evil, which beset me most, it was with fear, and a secret unwillingness to part with that I prayed against. In my present state I do not pray that I may give up this or that evil ; for I have cheerfully given up all. Yet I feel a necessity of constantly looking unto Jesus, that I may not be ensnared again.

"Secondly. In my former state unprofitable thoughts sometimes carried me away. But now, I feel both inclination and power to reject them immediately.

"Thirdly. Though I frequently was enabled to delight myself in the Lord, yet there were certain times that I seemed to be forgetful of Him, so far as to lose the happiness arising from communion with

Him. But now I feel that promise made good, 'He will keep them in perfect peace, whose minds are stayed on Him.'

"Fourthly. In my former state, I loved Christian conversation; yet I was often ensnared by trifling conversation. But now Christian conversation is my constant aim, unless so far as I am obliged to speak about other necessary things.

"Fifthly. In my former state, though I was sensible of my unworthiness, yet I had not so clear a discovery of my short-comings in every particular, and of course could not see the necessity of keeping close to the fountain of my Redeemer's blood.

"Lastly. In my former state, I was often harassed with doubts and fears whether I should be admitted to behold the face of God in glory. In my present, I feel no doubt, at any time, of my being for ever with Him.

"This is the change my God has wrought in me, of which I am as sensible as that I exist. Yet I find, I am in an enemy's country, and feel myself attacked by various temptations: but by looking to the Captain of my salvation, I am 'more than conqueror.'"

I cannot but admire the great goodness of God in thus manifesting Himself to me at this very time; as I had a variety of trials to encounter, which must have made my hands hang down, had He not prepared me for them by a double portion of His grace. By this I was enabled to add to my faith courage; no hardship could make me afraid. I counted not my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. When riding in the midst of my pain, which was often beyond expression, I have been

constrained to cry, "O the honour of being an ambassador for Christ!" So many precious smiles of His face have rested upon me, while travelling round my Circuit, that every cross was light, every rough way smooth, and every crooked place straight.

O Lord, grant that I may not be found among the slumbering watchmen, or lazy, careless shepherds, when Thou shalt appear to reward Thy faithful labourers; and to require, at the slumbering watchman's hand, the blood of those who have perished through their unfaithfulness!

MATTHIAS JOYCE.

ATHLONE, *October 14th*, 1785.

IN the Minutes of Conference for the year 1814, the following notice of Mr. Joyce's death and character is given:—

MATTHIAS JOYCE, a brother whose memory is precious to all who knew him. He was early in life converted from the errors of Popery. A full and pleasing account is given in the Methodist Magazine of 1786 of the progress of the work of grace in his soul till his call to the ministry, and of his travels and labours in various parts of Ireland. He was a man of a remarkably loving and peaceful disposition; a wise, acceptable, and successful preacher; much tried in his family by various afflictions, which no doubt preyed on his spirits, and helped to bring on that debility, both of body and mind, which disqualified him for preaching during the last three years of his life. He was engaged in the ministry thirty years, and died, as he had lived, an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JAMES ROGERS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

SINCE I first began to recommend the great love of God in Christ Jesus to others, I have had many solicitations to give some account of His dealings with my own soul; yet I never could prevail on myself to attempt it till now. But having kept no journal, it cannot be expected that the following pages should contain anything more than a recital of a few particular circumstances which made the deepest impression upon my memory at the time they occurred. If these, or any of them, are made a blessing to my friends, let them give God the glory.

I was born in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in a large village called Marsk, in February, 1749. I was put to school early, and taught to read the Scriptures from a child; in some parts of which I found singular delight.

The Spirit of God began to strive with me when I was about three or four years old. On hearing a passing-bell, or seeing a corpse, I was very thoughtful, and would often ask my parents pertinent ques-

tions about a future state. On seeing lightning, or hearing a loud clap of thunder, my fears were usually alarmed to a high degree; and the more so as an impression always followed me, that it was God speaking from the clouds; and as I greatly expected, at these times, that He was just descending to judge the world, I would run to the door to see Him come! Such ideas as these were much increased and confirmed by several dreams, which I had from my infancy, about death, judgment, heaven, and hell.

When I was about ten years of age, I dreamed one night I saw fire bursting out of the earth in several parts; that it raged so furiously, and spread with such rapidity, that in a few seconds the whole globe was but one blaze! I thought I saw all the inhabitants of the place where I lived struck with inexpressible consternation and horror; and especially the bad people, as I called them, whom I had known to curse and swear, and get drunk; with many of my playfellows, who were accustomed to lie, and cheat, and play on the Sabbath: these I thought set up such dreadful shrieks and yells as were enough to pierce a heart of stone. As I looked up, the face of the sky seemed totally overspread with blackness. Instantly the forked lightnings began to play, till the heavens were all in one glare, and such loud peals of thunder followed, as I had never heard. The sun I could see no more; but I thought I got a transient sight of the moon, which appeared larger than ever I had seen it before, and as red as a huge mass of blood. The heavens seemed all in motion, and were exceedingly agitated; they appeared to work, and heave, and rock from side to side, till not one star was left remaining:

thus was that scripture fulfilled, "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." The sky seemed next to pass away, or, as I remember to have read, "to be wrapp'd together as a scroll." My favourite passage I now saw fulfilled; namely, "And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." (Daniel vii. 9, 10.)

The thoughts I had about the deplorable state of my guilty neighbours now seemed swallowed up in a most painful anxiety for my own safety. I was waiting in expectation of a summons to the bar; but, deeply conscious that I was unprepared, was alarmed to such a degree that I awoke.

After recollecting myself a little, and finding I was still an inhabitant of this world, my joy was inexpressible! Nevertheless it had a most solemn effect upon my mind, and the impression remained for many weeks. How true are those words in Job xxxiii.: "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." From this time I began to feel great desires to be taught how I might obtain a preparation to meet my Judge with comfort.

On the winter evenings several neighbours frequently came to sit and spend an hour in friendly

conversation with my father, and oftentimes upon religious subjects, according to their light. To these I was very attentive; and when my hour for bed came, I would beg hard to sit a little longer, though I had not courage to urge the chief reason which induced me, namely, a desire to hear what might be said upon these subjects.

I remember one night in particular, many queries were proposed about salvation: none of them thought it possible that any certainty could be attained in this life, whether they should be saved at last or not. But the general opinion was, that our actions would all be weighed in the day of judgment; and if our good deeds over-balanced our bad ones, we should go to heaven; but if the contrary, we should go to hell. But some dissented a little from this, and thought, Nay, but God was merciful, and had sent His Son to die for sinners; and that their best way would be to amend their lives, and do all they could, and Christ would make up the rest. One of these they all agreed must be the way; and, to confirm them in this conclusion, one observed that the parson of the parish was exactly of the same mind.

I endeavoured to satisfy myself with these determinations, but I could not. It was all, alas! left at uncertainty; and this would not do for one that was daily expecting a call to appear before the Judge of quick and dead.

However, I thought no way so likely to succeed, as to say my prayers regularly morning and evening, and be as careful as possible in refraining from bad words, especially from telling lies, playing on the Sabbath-day, neglecting my book, quarrelling with my schoolfellows, doing anything I was taught to

believe was wrong, or keeping company with such wicked boys as led me into the way of such temptations.

At eleven years of age I was called to bear a severe trial by the death of one of the tenderest and best of fathers. He had been subject for many years to what we call the heart-colic, and was often apparently near death. At such times, when every other hope seemed to fail, I used to get into a corner, fall down upon my knees, and there pray and weep, and wrestle with God to spare his life: and though I knew not the Lord, yet I often felt a confidence that He heard me, and would grant my request; and when I found it so, such gratitude and uncommon sweetness would rest upon my mind for many days as is better felt than expressed. However, he died at last of that disorder, after a few days' illness.

For some time I was quite inconsolable; and had I been possessed of the whole world, I would gladly have given it all to have died with him, if I had been prepared. But as I knew I was not, I earnestly begged of my eldest brother (then upwards of twenty) to tell me what I must do to be saved; believing as soon as I was ready for heaven, God would certainly take me, which was all that I wished for. But alas! I gained no ground, for want (I believe) of proper instruction; for as yet the light of the glorious Gospel had not shined in that neighbourhood.

My father leaving no will, and his little property consisting chiefly of land, it fell of course to my eldest brother; so that the family soon after became dispersed. I was removed to some distance among strangers; but I found favour in their sight, and was suffered to want for nothing. Here I got a new set

of acquaintance, but equally destitute of the knowledge of God.

It pleased Him, however, whose ways are in the mighty waters, and His judgments in the great deep, to find means to teach me the knowledge of His salvation.

A wild young man, a few doors from where I lived, contrary to the will of his parents, and against the advice of all his friends, would go to sea; but he had not been there long before he was heartily weary, and ran away from his master. He was ashamed, however, to return home, and equally afraid of being known, as it was in the height of the French war, when the press was very hot. He therefore set out for some inland town, and took up his residence for some months in Northampton. Here the poor prodigal had time for reflection, and began to think on the mercies he had slighted in his father's house. By this strange chain of providences it was that he became acquainted with the Methodists, a small body of whom were in this place. He was invited by them, and afterwards went constantly to the preaching. His conscience being very soon thoroughly awakened, he readily joined their little society, and became a steady member.

After several months, he took courage, and wrote home to his friends. His father, always tender over him, was filled with joy to hear of his long-lost son; and went to the captain he had sailed with, got the indenture at a considerable expense, and the matter was made up; which happy circumstance no sooner reached the young man, than he set off, and returned to his father's house with a glad heart. †

His old acquaintance flocked to see him upon his arrival, and expected feasting, merriment, and, as

they call it, great doings. But the tables were now turned. He began to exhort us all to "flee from the wrath to come;" enforcing the necessity of repentance and the new birth, stating that old things must be done away, and all things become new; and he observed, that, instead of gluttony, drinking, singing, and dancing, we ought rather to fall upon our knees, and give God thanks for all His benefits.

His former companions gaped and stared at him as a monster; and some of them came near him no more, swearing he was turned Methodist, that his brain was hurt, and that, if they did not keep from him, he would convert them all, and make them as mad as himself. But these things had a very different effect upon me: I looked upon him as some angelic being dropped from the clouds, and was affected in an extraordinary manner while he was speaking to the rest; but as he took no notice of me, I concluded I was too vile for such a favourite of heaven to stoop to. I went away trembling and speechless, seeking a place to vent my grief in: but it enhanced my misery, when I found that I could not weep; for my heart seemed as black as hell, and as hard as a stone. I prayed again and again; but, as I thought, to little purpose. ~~How~~, I was clearly convinced that this was the way, and there was no other; but then I thought it was impossible I should ever feel the happiness which that young man experienced, ~~unless I can~~ I go to those people, and to that place where he found so blessed a change. I inquired what distance Northampton was, thinking to set out unknown to anyone, having a degree of confidence that God would take care of me; but finding it was near two hundred miles, and not knowing

one foot of the road, and being not yet fourteen years of age, I was quite discouraged ; and, being no longer able to contain my sorrow, I begged one of the family with whom I resided to intercede for me with the young man, that he would only speak to me ; thinking that if he would take notice of such an unworthy creature, I should be one of the happiest of mortals. To my great surprise, he not only embraced the first opportunity of speaking to me, but seemed to rejoice over me as one that had found great spoil. This brought to my mind that scripture, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And as it is with them, so I proved it to be with His people here.

From that time I date my acquaintance with the people of God, and to this day I have preferred them to all others. With what gratitude and delight have I often reflected upon and repeated those lines,—

"What a mercy is this,
What a heaven of bliss,
How unspeakably happy am I !
Gather'd into the fold,
With Thy people enroll'd,
With Thy people to live and to die !"

The first society I had intimacy with was in Guisborough, a small market-town in the north of Yorkshire, and about eight miles distant from where I lived. This was the nearest place where there was preaching ; and the road to it was not very good, as it lay over some mountains, and through several lonely woods, which were rendered more so on very dark winter evenings. But my need was such, that I never thought a moment on these discouragements. Sometimes I had company ; at other times

I had none: but I do not remember that (when business would permit) I ever neglected to go regularly once a fortnight, on (I think) the Tuesday evenings; and this was all the preaching we then had.

Some time after this, two or three of us began to think, if possible, of getting the preaching at the village where I lived. We spoke to the preachers, who appeared very willing to make a trial, and accordingly visited us occasionally a few times. The word was attended with power, and they soon joined about fifteen of us in a class, and afterwards took us into their Plan. We now thought ourselves highly honoured indeed. Our little number increased to about twenty; and then the enemy, who had hitherto been pretty quiet, began to show himself. His chief attack was upon the few united together to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling." Against these he roared horribly. At our preachings and public meetings, the sons of Belial would assemble in a most shameless and tumultuous manner; but they were never permitted to hurt anyone, although they spoke many great and swelling words.

Once while one of our friends was at prayer, and I and a few more were kneeling by him, a stout old woman, with vengeance in her countenance, advanced, having a sharp broad axe, (such as carpenters hew wood with,) with many dreadful imprecations against the Methodists. She cursed horribly, and swore she would be the death of some one, if she was hanged for it the next hour. She stood a few seconds with her arms extended; no one offered to oppose her, but we prayed the more fervently, till, just as she appeared to be making a blow at the young man's head then at prayer, the axe fell to the floor, as if the use of her hands was perfectly taken away, and she

retired as fast as she could into another room, still cursing the youth for being the ruin of her son and daughter; as she was sure those "false prophets" would never have come there but for him; and she did not know where it would stop, but was sure the devil would get them all. She used many such like expressions. Not long after this she was called to give up her accounts to God.

But these persecutions because of the word proved a sifting time; and many, who countenanced the preaching at first, appeared by and by to have been mere "stony-ground hearers." Nay, even our own society was soon diminished to about twelve. These held out for a few months, till the leader and his wife, with the man also who took in the preachers, were taken to Abraham's bosom. The death of these three in so short a time as a few months was an awful visitation. Those of us that remained proving unfaithful, the candlestick was very soon after removed to another place. Two or three of us followed it, and continued for a little time; but, by and by, our love also waxed cold.

Though I was now about fifteen years of age, I had never been able to say that my sins were forgiven. Nevertheless, my desires were strong, and often did the Lord give me a foretaste of His love; but, having no one near to speak to, the adversary gained an advantage over me. I gave way by little and little; and my old companions, soon observing me less grave and circumspect, began to solicit me to join with them as formerly. This I refused for a time, but not with the resolution and steadfastness I had done before; so that they were encouraged to use other means of gaining me over. With what shame and sorrow of heart do I still reflect, that in

a little time I joined them in parties of pleasure, and went from bad to worse, till I became tenfold more a child of hell than ever! For, having once given way, my conscience became my constant tormentor day and night. I compared myself to that unhappy spirit who, being cast out of his habitation, went about seeking rest, but found none. Thus I continued for upwards of two years, running as if in haste for damnation, with a lighted candle in my hand; striving to stifle conscience with repeated acts of disobedience. The Spirit of God seemed for a time as if He had given me up, till I left the place I now had lived at upwards of five years, and removed to another village called Newton-under-Ousbury, where was a small society of sincere Christians, with monthly preaching, a public meeting, and a class on the Lord's day. Here the Lord began to strive with me again; but I fought against Him, and still grieved His Holy Spirit.

I removed from thence to Stockton-upon-Tees. Upon my arrival here I began to reflect upon my folly; conscience was awakened once more, and I obeyed its dictates so far as to join the society. But seeing my class-leader intoxicated with liquor, I was offended, and went near him no more.

After spending near one year in this place, I removed to Whitby in the year 1768, where was a large and flourishing society. I felt very unsettled and unhappy, till at last I resolved, God being my helper, to join that loving people. But then I thought I was too vile, and was greatly discouraged by reflecting on my repeated backslidings for upwards of four years. I doubted whether I should ever stand long. However, my convictions increased, so that I could take no rest day or night, till I sent

for that pious man, William Ripley. I expected that he would upbraid me with my past ingratitude to God, and His people; but he said not a word of this kind. No! he saw me labouring under the weight of a wounded spirit, and the comfort he administered to me at that time was a cordial to my soul. Without asking me any questions, he fell upon his knees to write a note admitting me into the society, which I received with a trembling hand, fearing that my poor unfaithful heart would again start aside as a broken bow. But, glory be to God, He was better to me than all my fears. In five days He blessed me with what I never knew before; namely, a clear sense of pardon. This was on February 6th, 1769, about ten o'clock in the evening. I believe that I might have received this years before, when under those first awakenings of the Spirit of God, had I fallen into the same hands; but the people I was first connected with, though very serious and devout, were less evangelical in their sentiments. I had still retained a notion that my repentance was not sufficient; that I must be much more in earnest, feel more terror, more sorrow, deeper convictions, &c., before I could possibly attain a sense of pardon. This my friends in Whitby soon discerned, and told me, if God saw it necessary, He would deepen my convictions; but for me to pray for this, and to wait a little and a little longer, before I would dare to look for His favour, was the ready way to lose even the distress I then felt. They therefore told me that I must pray for nothing but a sense of the favour of God. Two of them one night vehemently urged me to embrace the promises by faith; assured me that all things were ready; and insisted that I must, that very night, believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and I should certainly be saved. At first I thought them so wild in their notions, and withal so unreasonable in their demands, that I could scarcely refrain from being angry. My carnal nature spurned at it, because I thought it as impossible for me to believe, as to pull the sun from the firmament. However, when they had talked to me thus for nearly two hours, I was exceedingly affected; and, trembling between hope and fear, I begged, in a degree of agony, that they would pray for me. Accordingly, we all fell on our knees. That zealous man of God, John Rogers, prayed first; and at every word he uttered my heart felt, and I firmly believed that God would grant him his heart's desire. In that solemn moment, all the sufferings of Christ came to my mind. By the eye of faith I had as real a view of His agony on Calvary as ever I had of any object by the eye of sense. I saw His hands and His feet nailed to the cross; His head crowned with thorns; and His side pierced with the soldier's spear; with innumerable drops of blood falling from different parts of His body, and His face all covered therewith. But O, what a look was that! Such an inexpressible degree of approbation was communicated to my soul thereby, as I shall never forget. While I now recollect it, my overflowing heart and eyes almost forbid my proceeding. In that moment my burden was gone; my heart was brought out of bondage into glorious liberty; and the love which I felt for God and all mankind was inexpressibly great. I was constrained to cry, with David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." I seemed as if I had never known happiness till now, and could hardly think it possible that I should learn war any more.

"I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat ;
My soul mounted higher,
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet."

I now went about among my old acquaintance, with a confidence that they would all repent and be converted if they knew how ready Christ was to save them. Some I found willing to hear what I had to say ; others stared at me as one quite out of my senses. However, as nothing discouraged me, if I found them unwilling to let me pray with them, I used to fall on my knees in the midst of the floor, and praise God for what He had done for me, and pray that He would let them see their wants, and give them all to experience the same blessing which I enjoyed. It pleased God to work powerfully at that time, especially among the young people ; many of whom came from a considerable distance to hear the word. I and some others had great delight in accompanying them on their way home. Nor can I reflect on those seasons without singular pleasure, when we sang the praises of God as we walked along, and when we kneeled down in the fields, or on the sea-shore, and commended each other to the grace of God. This was in the twentieth year of my age.

About this time the Lord raised up several witnesses of entire sanctification, whose daily walk and conversation did honour to their profession. With some of these I often conversed, and they would frequently speak of the blessedness of this salvation from inbred sin. I did not fully understand them at first, but thought I was as happy as I could be ; nor

did I know that I wanted anything which I had not received. However, not many days after this, being closely tempted, I was convinced that, though the guilt of sin was all done away, yet there were in me the remains of an evil nature; that, though I was happy in a sense of acceptance, and had power also over inward and outward sin, yet the fountain of corruption was not dried up; that I had yet a degree of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. And had I not been told that this is consistent with a state of justification, it is probable I should have cast away my confidence, as the enemy strongly suggested that my experience was all a delusion. The attack was severe while it lasted, for I reasoned with the temptation till my soul was in an agony; but in my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He graciously heard me, and delivered me out of all my fears; so that my evidence of pardon was more distinct and clear than ever. And as I believed the report, and cordially received the testimony of the happy few who professed entire sanctification, I felt strong desires awakened in my soul for that inestimable blessing; and being daily urged by some of these to press after it, and to expect it every moment by faith alone, in a little time my thirst was such, that I could not rest, whatever place or company I was in.

“ My vehement soul cried out oppress’d,
Impatient to be freed;
Nor could I, no, nor would I rest,
Till I was free indeed.”

In reading the Scriptures I was more and more enlightened to see, and encouraged to hope for, deliverance from the root of sin. I saw there were given unto me exceeding great and precious pro-

mises, that I should be made a partaker of the Divine nature; and that the great end for which our Lord was manifested in the flesh, was "to destroy the works of the devil, to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." And I farther perceived, that not only the promise of God, but His oath also, was given of old to His covenant people, "that they should be delivered out of the hands of their enemies, that they might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of their life."

From the manner in which this subject is introduced in the New Testament, I was led to infer two things. First, that the enemies there meant were our sins, especially the evils of our own heart. And, secondly, that the design of God is not to defer the destruction of these till death, or even to some little time before it, but that "now is the accepted time;" for He here declares, His will is, that we should serve Him all the remaining part of our life in holiness, and without fear; which St. John, in his first Epistle, iv. 18, says we cannot do until we are made first perfect in love.

Indeed, the whole Bible seemed calculated to raise my expectation of an answer to that prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And the more I contrasted the spirituality of the law with my own corrupt nature, the more eager were my desires.

At last I resolved neither to eat nor sleep till my desire was accomplished. I had no sooner made that resolution than I was tempted to reason upon the rashness of it. But such was the condescension of God, that He indulged my importunity, and granted my request. I went with a trembling heart to the

very house where it had pleased Him to shed abroad His pardoning love in my soul. That pious family no sooner learned my errand than they encouraged me to expect the blessing that hour; and exhorted me to believe on the Lord Jesus for full salvation. We then fell on our knees; and a good woman, one Mary Best, full of faith and love, wrestled and pleaded with the Lord for me. In less than fifteen minutes my burden was removed, and I felt an entire change, accompanied with a peculiar humbling sweetness; but not that rapturous joy I always thought attended that perfect liberty. On this account I was tempted much to reason; and, it is probable, the enemy would have wrested away my shield, but for the comforting interposition of my friends, who were not, like me, ignorant of Satan's devices. They told me it was a common case that a soul might be emptied of sin, and yet not filled with love till afterwards; that the blessing of Christian perfection consisted in feeling I am nothing, and Christ is all in all. This I found true by experience, and therefore I was enabled henceforth to rejoice in a full assurance of this great salvation. In this glorious liberty I walked for, at least, three months; during which time, notwithstanding many fiery darts were shot at me, I could sing,—

“Not a cloud doth arise,
To darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes.”

When I looked for those inward risings of anger, pride, and self-will, which, like dry tinder, were formerly ready to catch fire at any provocation, I found them not; but, on the contrary, I found meekness, humility, and resignation. I was so truly

humbled with a sense of my own nothingness, that I rejoiced to suffer reproach for the name of Christ. That natural enmity to the pure law of God being now totally removed, His commandments became more joyous than ever; and I could say, in a sense that I never could before, "The law of God is in my heart, even the law of love." I felt it the constraining principle, which led me to do and suffer the whole will of God. But, at the same time, I felt my ignorance and helplessness, together with the weakness and unworthiness which attended my best services: hence my daily cry was,

"Every moment, Lord, I want
The merit of Thy death."

And, blessed be God! I felt it applied. Through faith in His blood I had constant access to the Father, through the Spirit; yea, and had fellowship with the Father and the Son by the Holy Ghost.

My love to God was accompanied with fervent desires for the salvation of immortal souls, and a conviction that I was called of God to preach the Gospel. I thought if I could explain to others what I then felt, they would all repent and be converted. I was at this time at a considerable distance from my relations; and, as my first care was for their salvation, I could not rest till I reached my native place, being fully persuaded that I had a message from God unto them. I got a considerable number of my friends together; and, standing up for the first time in my father's house, faithfully warned them to flee from the wrath to come. All seemed astonished, and some were much affected. But, alas! it was not as I expected. I did not find it such an easy matter to convert them from the error

of their way as I imagined. I plainly saw this power belongeth unto God alone. However, it pleased Him to give me some encouragement. For, the second time I met them, while at the last prayer, the house was filled with groans and cries, till at length one exclaimed, (namely, my sister-in-law,) "Glory be to God! Glory be to God! He hath blessed me! He hath set my soul at liberty! I can praise Him, and I will praise Him! O, praise God for me! Praise Him! Praise Him! Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!" And so she went on for a considerable time.

This greatly encouraged me. But Satan seemed very unwilling that I should proceed, and therefore endeavoured to throw hindrances in my way. I then removed from the family I had been so much blessed with, to another, who, though they had much longer professed religion, yet were less alive to God. Here I fell into a snare, which brought my soul into great heaviness; for, parleying with temptation, I lost my confidence, and became almost distracted for a season.

About this time I had the following dream. I thought I was bitten by a large serpent; that I received a wound which I knew to be very dangerous; and that unavoidable death would ensue, if a speedy cure could not be effected. But where to go for it, I knew not. My hand was presently swelled to a prodigious size, and the poison seemed to spread very swiftly through my whole body. Observing this, I was in an agony of distress, when one told me of a physician at some distance, who alone could cure the bite of that serpent. On this, I determined to go to him immediately; but when I got to the door, I saw an innumerable multitude of serpents,

through the midst of which I must pass. My torture and perplexity being inexpressible, I turned into the house again. But reflecting that if I stayed here, death was the certain consequence, and that I could but die, if I went; and considering farther, that if the physician could cure the first wound, he could also cure the rest; I resolved to push through them at all hazards, and so ran with all my might. I thought I got many bites more; yet none so bad as the first. At last, coming to the physician, he received me with kindness, and applied a balmy medicine, which immediately relieved my pain, and removed the inflammation. Yet still my distress was great, and I told him, "I dare not return back again; for the numerous serpents I have just passed through will again assault and wound me." But he bade me be of good courage, and anointed my whole body with the same balmy medicine, and said it would hinder them from wounding me, though they might assault me; but if they should wound me, he bade me return to him again. On this I thanked him, and with a grateful heart took my leave. When I came towards the serpents, I saw them with joy and surprise sunk back into holes in the earth, and only their heads peeping out, except a few who assaulted me, but had no power to hurt me. So I got safe to my mother's house.

By this dream I was persuaded that I ought to leave that family, and therefore resolved to do it without delay. I had no sooner fixed this determination, than a glimpse of hope was darted into my soul, and I saw that Jesus was the Physician. Believing that He was both able and willing to heal my wound, I retired (as was my daily custom at that hour) to read and pray; when the Lord, instead of

upbraiding me, applied the precious balm of His blood, and restored the joy of His salvation to my distressed soul. Taking my Bible, and lifting up my heart to heaven, I opened on the seventh chapter of St. John; and coming to that passage, "Jesus stood up in that great day of the feast, and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink," I shall never forget the manner in which these words were applied to my soul. It was as if the Lord Jesus Christ was standing before me in person, and actually speaking these words to me. If He had, it was not possible my assurance could have been greater, that all my backslidings were healed.

"Stung by the scorpion sin,
My poor expiring soul
The balmy sound drank in,
And was at once made whole:
I saw my Lord upon the tree,
And felt again He died for me."

I now left Whitby, and went to reside about five miles distant. Here Providence cast my lot with a most agreeable and happy family, and the Lord confirmed what He had wrought. The holy flame was such in my heart, that I went to the neighbouring villages, and, especially every Lord's day, stood in the open streets to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. I met with some discouragements, especially from old dry professors, who concluded I ran too fast to run long; but in less than six months it pleased God to raise a society in Lythe, a village about a mile distant. We procured a comfortable place to preach in, and the Lord added daily to our number. We then solicited the travelling preachers to visit us, and soon after they gave us one night in a month.

The enemy had often strove to prevent the Gospel from taking root in that wicked place ; but now, seeing the word mightily prevail, notwithstanding all his stratagems, he raged with redoubled fury. Some ruffians combined to prevent my preaching ; and were determined, some way or other, to carry their point. As I was not afraid of man, and the few whom God had raised up were resolved to stand by me, we regarded not their threats.

After they had often disturbed us in our preaching-house, one night these sons of Belial collected all their forces, and assembled at the door to attack us as we came out. Their number was great, and I had no sooner dismissed the people, than they began the assault. Hearing this, I pushed forward from the pulpit, and got into the midst of them. They saluted me with volleys of oaths, and showers of stones and dirt, and in less than two minutes fell to blows. One of the stoutest of them advanced, with eyes full of fury, and made several strokes at my head ; but I received them upon my left arm, which, by this means, was much bruised. When he could not bring me to the ground, he was enraged ; and, watching his opportunity, whilst I endeavoured to rescue one of my friends whom they were beating, he came behind, and gave me such a blow on my right temple, that I staggered like a drunken man. My hat fell off, and my senses were greatly confused ; so that I must have fallen, had he followed his blow. This doubtless he would have done ; but in that moment a young girl, who had lately been awakened and had joined our society, thinking I was much hurt, instantly took up a stone, about two pounds weight, and threw it at his back. He then left me,

to revenge himself upon her ; and indeed she suffered dreadfully : for he took up a stone, equally large, and threw it with such violence in her face, that she fell to the ground, and lay motionless. She was supposed to be dead, and was carried home to her mother's house. However, it pleased God that she recovered ; yet she was cut in the most dreadful manner, having her cheek laid open to the bone ; and she will bear this mark of suffering for her Lord's sake to her dying hour. Others of our friends were hurt. One, in particular, had his face almost covered with blood ; and his coat, waistcoat, and shirt torn half-way down his back. It is probable we might have come worse off still, had not God taken our part ; for, "as the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," so the Lord struck our enemies with terror, by sending, in that very moment, dreadful flashes of lightning from a cloud, which seemed to burst over their guilty heads. Finding an opportunity, while they were terrified, we endeavoured to escape ; but retreated gradually, as some of our people were old and infirm, and we were not willing to leave them in the rear, lest they should become a prey. The next day we found means to bring some of the ringleaders to justice, and they disturbed us no more.

Having spent almost two years among these my first children in the Gospel, though I loved them as my own soul, I was not easy in my mind to be shut up in one place, and that a small one. I therefore set out on foot upon a journey of about one hundred miles in circumference, preaching wherever I found a door open.

In this journey I met with some difficulties : nevertheless, my encouragements more than counter-

balanced them. Among several others, one thing was as pleasing as remarkable. An old man came to hear preaching at Wingate, a small village near Sunderland; and was deeply convinced of sin. He went home with trembling and terror, and could not sleep till he had found a clear sense of pardon. Being filled with joy unspeakable, he communicated this to his wife, with whom he had lived upwards of fifty years. She was exceedingly affected with the relation of what God had wrought in him; and wished to go the next evening with him, and hear for herself. When she came and heard, she was deeply convinced; and returning home, she asked her husband if he thought God would give her the same blessing which he had obtained. The old man, full of faith, cried, "O, yes! all things are ready. You may have it this night: He hath saved me, who am the greatest sinner." Being encouraged at this, they agreed to pray together alternately, confident that God would bless her also, even that very night. They continued wrestling, Jacob-like, till after four in the morning, and had no answer. Though their strength was much exhausted with praying so long, being both upwards of fourscore years of age, and consequently very infirm; yet they would not give up; and the Lord soon after condescended to grant her request, and to speak her sins forgiven. What a fulfilment of that promise, "If two of you shall agree on earth touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them!" And what encouragement for poor sinners of every age, that these two, even at the eleventh hour, were not rejected by the Lord of the harvest!

This journey being in the depth of winter, the weather severe, and some of my lodgings not very

comfortable, was the cause of a long and dangerous illness, the relics of which settled in my left hand, which gathered and broke in several places. The whole habit of my body was brought so low, that I was thought by most who saw me to be in a deep consumption; indeed I fully expected that I should not recover, and was greatly rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon with Him whom my soul loved. Nevertheless, for His sake I was willing to live, if thereby I might bring glory to His name.

I continued in this weak state of body for upwards of two years. Yet I laboured as much as my health would permit for some months on the Hull Circuit. In the year 1772, one of the preachers appointed for York going to America, Mr. Wesley wrote to me to take his place; which I did. And I continued on that Circuit until my strength was so exhausted that I could travel no longer. I was then advised by Mr. Bruce, a medical gentleman in York, to use the cold bath. And in preference to all others he recommended Ilkley Wells, a place near Otley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Before I had been there a week, I felt the good effects of it; and I am fully persuaded that, under God, that water was the means of saving my life. After using it constantly for about three months, in October, 1773, I went to Thirsk, and at the request of many kind friends spent my winter there; where I employed the little strength God had graciously restored to me, and, I trust, not without some fruit of my labour.

In May, 1774, although I had no relapse in my disorder, it was thought advisable that I should return to Ilkley Wells for a while to confirm my cure. I did so, and continued in that neighbourhood till August. I now thought myself able to take a

Circuit again, and therefore at the Bristol Conference that year I was appointed to labour with Mr. Duncan Wright, at Thirsk. I was truly thankful for such a fellow-labourer; for he acted the part of a father to me. We had the hearts of the people, and the Lord added many seals to our ministry.

In the year 1775 I was received into full connexion, and appointed at the Leeds Conference for Edinburgh; where I had for my colleagues T. R. and R. W., two faithful men, whose hearts were in the work. The people soliciting our stay another year, Mr. R. and I were permitted to remain; and Mr. M'N. was appointed with us. But though we laboured in love and harmony both with each other and among the people, yet very little fruit appeared at the end of two years. We had found two hundred and sixty members in the Edinburgh Circuit; we joined upwards of two hundred more, and yet, in the end, left only two hundred and forty-five; that is, fifteen less than we found. So fluctuating was that people! Nevertheless we have a few steady, faithful, hospitable friends in Scotland.

I should probably have stayed longer in that kingdom, had my health permitted. What injured my constitution a second time was, a journey which I took to the Isle of Bute. It is eighteen miles long, and in most parts about three or four broad; situate about forty miles from Glasgow; its inhabitants in general speak the Erse language; few understand English. Being invited by one of the natives, a well-wisher to religion, I was resolved to give them a trial. We had about twenty miles to go by water; and in the second voyage I made, just after we put to sea, a dreadful storm arose. The boatmen were so foolhardy as not to put back again; and, the

wind being nearly right a-head of our vessel, they were obliged to tack most of the way. The women passengers and the children began to shriek and cry dreadfully, so that the sailors were obliged to put them all below, and to fasten down the hatches. The place was small, and the people so numerous, that I expected they would be suffocated; but there was no alternative. The rest drank so much whisky, that I feared there would not be men enough sober to work the vessel. They pressed me to partake with them; but I could not taste. No; I had other work; looking every moment when the vessel would fill, and upset, as part of it was an open boat. The rain and hail were very heavy from the clouds; and the sea also breaking over us, I had nothing left dry about me. Thus I sat, or stood, without any shelter, for twelve or fourteen hours, exposed to the whole, whilst the water ran out of my shoes. But, contrary to our fears, it pleased God at last to bring us safe to the haven where we would be.

Having no clothes to shift me, I went straight to the inn where I had slept before; intending to go immediately to bed, as my only resource, to prevent a fit of sickness; but, to my great disappointment, a gentleman's family, who had been detained by the same storm, had possession of my lodgings. In about two hours, an old man, hearing of my situation, came and gave me a kind invitation to his little cottage. I gladly accepted his friendly offer; and hastening home with him, put off my wet clothes; but my bed being raised only about twelve inches from a damp earthen floor, and there being no fire, it was not quite so comfortable as my condition then required, especially as the coverings were not warm, being nearly worn out. The consequence was, in a

few hours I found my throat exceedingly inflamed, and a burning feverish heat through my whole frame; so that I had little hope of ever seeing the main land again. It was also impracticable to send for any of my friends, because of the weather: yet, blessed be God, I was not friendless; for that Friend that sticketh closer than a brother did not leave me, neither forsake me. He who filleth the vast immensity of space with His presence can never be distant from those who hope in His mercy; nor can He fail to deliver them in the time of need. I have reason to speak thus; for such was His goodness, that without any human assistance, use of medicine, or any comforting cordial, (save that of the love of Christ,) in a few days I was able to go out again. But I was then hard put to it for food; and, having nothing that I could relish, I employed a poor woman to gather me a kind of shell-fish, about half the size of cockles, which was my chief support till I was able to return to the main land. After this I remained some months in Glasgow and Edinburgh; but did not recover my health for a long time.

In the year 1777 I was appointed to labour in the east of Cornwall. A journey of about five hundred miles was no small fatigue in my then weak state of body; but the Lord was with me. I looked upon it as His doing; therefore set out in His name, and found sweet communion with Him in the way.

I had long desired to converse with that great and good man, Mr. Fletcher; and now an opportunity offered itself. Stopping at Bristol for a few days to rest myself and horse, I heard of his being at Mr. Ireland's, about three miles off, in a poor state of health, and with two of my brethren took a ride to see him. When we came there he was returning

from a ride, which he was advised by his physician to take every day. Dismounting from his horse, he came towards us with arms spread open, and eyes lifted up to heaven. His apostolic appearance, with the whole of his deportment, amazingly affected us.

The first words he spoke, while yet standing in the stable by his horse, were a part of the sixteenth chapter of St. John, most of which he repeated. And whilst he pointed out the descent of the Holy Ghost, as the great promise of the Father, and the privilege of all New-Testament believers, in a manner I never had heard before, my soul was dissolved into tenderness, and became even as melting wax before the fire.

As an invidious report had been spread that he had recanted what he had lately written against Calvinism, in those excellent writings of his, entitled his "Checks," &c., I took the liberty to mention the report, and asked him what he thought had given rise to it. He replied, he could not tell, except that he had refrained from speaking on controverted points since he came to Mr. Ireland's; partly by reason of the poor state of his health, and because he did not wish to grieve his kind friend, by making his house a field of controversy; but assured us he had never yet seen cause to repent of what he had written in defence of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Minutes. And though he believed his close application was the means of reducing his body to the state in which we then saw it, yet if he fell a victim, it was in a good cause.

After a little farther conversation upon the universal love of God in Christ Jesus, we were about to take our leave, when Mr. Ireland sent his footman into the yard with a bottle of red wine, and some

slices of bread upon a waiter. We all uncovered our heads while Mr. Fletcher craved a blessing upon the same; which he had no sooner done, than he handed first the bread to each, and then, lifting up his eyes to heaven, pronounced those words: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." Afterwards, handing the wine, he repeated in like manner: "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. But such a sacrament I never had before. A sense of the Divine presence rested upon us all; and we were melted into floods of tears. His worthy friend, Mr. Ireland, grieved to see him exhaust his little strength by so much speaking, took him by the arm, and almost forced him into the house; while he kept looking wishfully, and speaking to us, as long as we could see him. We then mounted our horses, and rode away. That very hour more than repaid me for my whole journey from Edinburgh to Cornwall.

When I came to Plymouth-Dock I found a lively and loving society. My heart clave to them. My fellow-labourers and I had a very agreeable year together upon that Circuit, and some good was done. My health also was much restored.

In 1778 I was appointed to labour in Kent. It was the first year of the grand encampment upon Cox-Heath; which consisted of about fifteen thousand men. Being only at the distance of half a mile from the Heath, for two or three weeks before I entered upon my Circuit, I generally preached in the camp once a day. I have reason to believe some of the seed then sown was not lost, having since met with persons both in England and Ireland who testified they had cause to thank God for the few opportunities they then enjoyed. How often is that word

fulfilled, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days!"

On December 4th I was married to Miss Martha Knowlden, a young woman of a worthy family in Loose, near Maidstone, with whom, by a wonderful chain of providences, I became acquainted about three years before at Edinburgh. She was brought up a Dissenter, and feared the Lord from her infancy; and was often comforted and sweetly drawn by the love of God, into a patient waiting for Christ. But she never had a clear sense of pardon till some time after she joined the Methodist society. About four years after she found peace with God, and near one year after our marriage, she became more acquainted with the deep things of God than before: inbred sin was removed by sanctifying grace, and the perfect love of God was shed abroad in her heart. Her great modesty and diffidence would not let her say much; but all her words, works, and tempers showed what great things the Lord had done for her soul. One striking part of her conduct among many others I would mention here, recommending it to the imitation of all, especially to those of her own sex. When anything of a trying nature happened in the society, while others would have been talking over and repeating grievances; her method always was, to retire immediately for secret prayer, where she usually left her burden with the Lord. She was of few words; no tattler, no busy-body, but a keeper at home. She carefully refrained from speaking evil of anyone; but when any had used her unkindly, or caused pain to her mind, she bore it in silence, and recommended them to God in prayer. She would never dispute with anyone. While she lived, her whole deportment was an unspeakable blessing to

me. And in her death she gave testimony of God's power to save to the uttermost them that come to Him through Christ Jesus.

In the year 1779 I was appointed to labour at Leeds, where I found a people ripe for the doctrine of holiness; and many that year believed unto full salvation. This was the richest soil for Methodism I had yet known. We found two thousand two hundred members in society, and about twenty local preachers, who greatly assisted us in the work; and the word of the Lord ran and was glorified; to which the harmony which subsisted between the preachers, stewards, leaders, and people, greatly contributed.

In the year 1780 I went to Sheffield, where I found a large society, but less united than those I had left; and therefore I was not so comfortable for a time as I could wish. It grieved me also that one of my fellow-labourers did not lovingly draw in the same yoke, and soon after left the Connexion. The uneasiness occasioned in the society by his disaffection, for some months threatened us with disagreeable consequences; and our enemies expected a considerable division among us: but "He that sitteth above the water-floods" found means to prevent it. So that, instead of losing in our number, we found at the end of the year an increase of ninety-seven members.

In the latter end of June, Mr. Wesley, according to his usual tour, came to Sheffield, where Mr. Bradford, who then travelled with him, was taken very ill, and was obliged to desist. I took his place for about six weeks; but I soon found my constitution was inadequate to the task. Being much fatigued with riding in the heat, which was very intense at that time, I was seized with a bilious complaint the

first day the Conference began at Leeds. Doctor Hamilton, with other physicians, paid every attention to my case, which appeared very doubtful for some days. The chief means whereby I found relief were bleeding and the warm bath, but it was some time before I was pronounced out of danger. I here learned some useful lessons while under my Father's rod; He gave me peace and resignation when my pain was most extreme, and during my whole confinement I do not know that I had one murmuring thought. After my recovery, I felt a degree of gratitude which I had not known before; and a resolution fixed in my heart, to be more devoted to God and zealous for the good of souls than ever.

I was appointed to labour another year in Sheffield, and was highly favoured with the assistance of two good young men. We laboured together in harmony; had peace in all our borders, and the work of God greatly prospered. Many souls were awakened and born of God, and one hundred and forty were added to the society.

In the year 1782 I was appointed for Macclesfield. As the Circuit was large and unwieldy, four preachers were sent, with instructions to divide it. We did this in the best manner we could; and my worthy colleague, Mr. Myles, took charge of the Burslem division. But this, with some other amendments, such as furnishing the preachers' dwelling-house by subscription, changing the stewards, &c., gave deep offence to a few individuals; but the hearts of the people were united to their preachers; and notwithstanding all the difficulties we met with, we were greatly comforted among them, and at the end of two years I had the satisfaction of leaving them considerably increased in number; and I trust, upon

the whole, not less alive to God than I found them.

But all the trials I had ever known were small when compared with that which I was here called to bear. After a lingering sickness of about two months' continuance, the Lord saw it right to tear from my bleeding heart the dear partner of my cares and sorrows, my ever faithful and affectionate wife.

As it so nearly concerns myself, and will probably be a blessing to some into whose hands these pages may fall, I shall make no apology for inserting a part of what passed during her last sickness.

It was on new-year's day that her danger began first to appear. After the renewal of the covenant, it was deeply impressed upon my mind, that her sickness would be unto death. Being greatly distressed on her account, I went to her, and told her my fears for her. She replied, with her usual sweetness, "Perhaps my life may not be in danger. You can remember the time when I was reduced much lower than I am now, and yet the Lord restored me. He bringeth down to the grave, and raiseth up again. The Lord can do great things. Nay, He hath done great things. Fear not, and all shall be well."

January 7th.—She still continued to grow weaker. Besides many other things which passed in conversation concerning her past life, and the dealings of God with her soul, she said to me, "What pleasure should it afford us, my dear, that we can look back on the five years we have lived together, and say, We have been helps and not hindrances to each other in the ways of God! And what cause have you, as well as I, to be happy in the reflection, that we have never had one jarring string since we knew each

other ; that, notwithstanding we have had many trials from others, yet we have never been the least cause of sorrow to each other ! And if the Lord should take me now, you will follow me, but not yet. No, my dear, you have more to do and to suffer ; but He who has hitherto supported will still be your Helper. You will live to be more useful and more happy than ever. The Lord knows you are upright before Him, so that you have nothing to fear. He will lay underneath you His everlasting arms : therefore go on, and let nothing discourage you. I believe the Lord will prosper what you take in hand, and that He will bless the children, and make them His children. You may be discouraged to think how you shall do with them when I am gone ; but you need not. The Lord will raise you up friends where you do not expect, and you shall want for nothing ; and, what is best of all, I shall meet you in glory."

In the evening she desired the children, Joseph and Benjamin, might be brought to her bed-side. She kissed them both, and prayed that the blessing of Jacob's God might ever attend them ; and then added, " I believe God will bless you, and make you a blessing to many. I believe He will make you good men, and you will one day follow me to heaven."

14th.—A part of the morning she was scarcely able to speak at all ; but her mind seemed quite composed, and a heavenly sweetness was in her countenance. I prayed with her, and afterwards, being seated by her, she burst suddenly into tears. On being asked the cause, she said, " O, it is happiness that makes weep. I am thinking of Jesus, and how His name charms all the heavenly host ; and the thought is almost overcoming. O, He is a precious

Saviour! I have many relations in heaven, who are near and dear unto me; a father, a mother, and sisters, and brothers, and others whom I loved tenderly; but they are all nothing when I think of Jesus; and I shall soon see Him, and praise Him better than I can now. Angels will be blessed companions above: but O, they are nothing; I can only think of Jesus. My sweet Saviour, I do love Thee! Where is that hymn that speaks of Jesus as the subject of all the angels' songs?" The hymn was read, though with many tears, while she seemed to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

On the same day Mr. Joseph Roe called to see her, and, being desired to walk up stairs into her room, she said to him, "The Lord favours me, Mr. Roe, in a peculiar manner. I have no pain; and, after all my unworthiness, He gives me sweetly to rejoice in His love, on a sick and dying bed. His condescension is so great, that, at times, a sense of it almost overpowers me. He is a precious Saviour, indeed He is; and those that cleave to Him with a sincere heart will ever find Him so. He knows I am sincere, though very undeserving; and all I have ever feared, or that has harassed my mind, has been a concern lest others should think me more than I am. I would not deceive anyone by professing more than I possess; the Lord knoweth. No; it would be an awful thing to do that. I would be sincere. It is good to be sincere. We shall all find it so when we come to a death-bed. I could wish we might all live to God more than we have ever done. What is the world, or anything in it? Jesus is all; and I shall praise Him for ever, I know I shall." While she spoke these words, she seemed to be in an ecstasy of joy and praise. Her sparkling eyes and outspread

arms made her to appear as if she were even now about to take her flight to her immortal home.

In the evening she called upon us to sing,

“He comes, He comes, the Judge severe;”

and she sung the whole hymn with us so loud, that all were amazed, and much affected.

18th.—She had a violent fit of coughing, and nature seemed in agonies. I said to her, “My dear, this is hard work.” She turned her languid face towards me, and said with a heavenly smile upon her countenance, “No, my dear, it is not. No, no, it is not hard. Jesus makes it sweet. He suffered much more for me. I should be ungrateful if I thought it hard, or if I had a murmuring thought. I am sensible it is the Lord’s goodness to me, and am thankful for it. My mind is composed, and I am sure all will be well.”

19th.—This was a happy day to her. While I stood by the bedside, she looked at me, and said, “The Lord will bless you, my dear. He will bless you. What cause have I to be thankful for the day I first knew you! But for you I might have been cast into the way of a gay world; but the Lord made you the instrument of snatching me from it. I hope I shall be one diamond more in your crown, and shall praise God to all eternity for you. Go on, my dear, and the Lord will be with you.”

23d.—George Pearson called to inquire after her, and by her desire he was asked up stairs. She gave him her hand, and said, “Well, well, George, I am glad to see you. I love to see the Lord’s children, and I believe you are one. You have known the ways of God a long time. The Lord has done much for you. Yes, He has blessed you, and He will bless

you still. He is a good and faithful God. I have ever proved Him so, and especially in this time of need. He does bless me, and comfort me, and will save me to the end. I believe you have had many trials since you first set out in the ways of God. You now draw near the end of your journey. You will not forsake the Lord now, and I am sure He will not forsake you. No, no; the Lord forsakes not His people. You see He does not forsake me, unworthy as I am." He prayed with her, and her mind was much encouraged.

Some time after this, she called the maid to her, and said, "Phœbe, be sure you be a good girl. Serve the Lord: give Him your heart. Religion is the best thing, Phœbe. Nothing else will do. Be truly religious, and then you will be fit to live, and fit to die. O, it is a blessed thing to be devoted to God in our youth. Do not forget what I say. I am dying. You may live many years, or you may follow me soon: we cannot tell. The Lord knoweth. O, think on these things; do; and then you will see me again in heaven."

24th.—Being asked how she felt, she replied, "Very comfortable. I feel the Lord is good to me. And, notwithstanding all my unworthiness, I believe He will accept me: nay, He does accept me. I know that Jesus is mine, and I am His! I am indebted to His merit for all: I am saved through Christ alone. I leave my every concern with Him; and I am sure He will keep that which I have committed to His care. My husband, my children, my friends, my every care I leave with Jesus. I fully believe He will preserve them all, and we shall meet above."

26th.—Being spent with coughing, when she had

recovered a little, she said, "Well, but I know my reward is with the Lord, and my God will be my help. And, glory be to His blessed name! I feel He doth help me. My trust is in the Lord; He is near unto me at all times." And again, after a severe fit of sickness, and a sleepless night, she turned her face to Miss Roe, and said, "Well, my dear, I think the Lord will not tarry long now. O, He is a gracious Saviour. We shall soon meet where we shall rejoice together for ever.

‘How shall we sing and triumph there,
Our dangers and escapes compare,
Our days of flesh and woe!’

Yes, we shall, we shall."

She continued in a rapture of joy, as one just ready to take the wing, while Miss Roe repeated the following lines:—

"He looks from the skies,
He shows us the prize,
And gives us a sign
That we shall o'ercome by the mercy Divine," &c.

For several days she was exceedingly weak, and could scarcely be heard to speak. At times, however, she whispered, "O, my precious, precious Lord, Thou wilt not tarry long! I shall soon be with Thee. What a day will that be! I shall praise Thee for ever. O, what a sweetness, what happiness I feel! I am quite resigned; entirely so. All that the Lord does is well done indeed! I am glad it is just as it is; all is right. Come, Lord Jesus! O, come quickly! O, come, my gracious Jesus! do come and help me! Thou wilt come soon. I shall soon be with Thee."

February 15th.—A little before three o'clock this

morning, she had a severe fit of coughing, and tried to get up the phlegm in vain. I said to her, "You have had a hard struggle, my dear; but this also is permitted by Him who loves you tenderly. Yes, you are dear to Him. God has some good end to answer in thus lengthening out your affliction. But your Lord is now saying, 'It is enough!' Only have faith and patience a few minutes longer, so shall you be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. You are this moment suffering all that you ever shall suffer to all eternity. You shall never, never, never suffer again! Methinks I hear Jesus now saying, 'Lo! I come quickly to wipe away all tears for ever from your eyes. It is done. Thou shalt sorrow no more, neither shalt thou feel any more pain!'"

She replied, "These are precious words. They comfort me; and I believe it is all true, and I shall prove it so. Yes, I shall! I shall! I shall!" After that she lay composed about a quarter of an hour, silently breathing prayer and praise to God. Then the cough came on again, and a most severe struggle ensued, which threw her into the agonies of death. She was convulsed all over in a moment. While the agony was at the height, it was thought she was delirious. Just as it seized her, she cried, "Pray! pray! pray! O, pray for me." We did so. The agony abated a little, and her reason returned. She instantly cried out with an uncommon vehemency, clasping her hands, "My God! my God! My Saviour! My King!" repeating it many times. I replied, "Yes, my dearest creature, your Saviour is coming to you; He is here. Jesus is now standing by, and His holy angels with Him. They are all waiting for you. See! see! their wings are already spread out to bear you away." She cried out with

an uncommonly loud voice, "I know it! I know it well!" repeating the same words at least ten times over. She was then silent a little. When I could speak, I repeated to her those lines of Mr. Pope:—

"Hark, they whisper! angels say,
'Sister spirit, come away!'"

telling her these her favourite verses were now completely fulfilled in her; that she was now in effect saying,—

"Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life."

I was going on to the end of the verse; but just as I repeated,

"Heaven opens on my eyes!"

she stopped me short by crying out so loud as to be heard down stairs, and through every room in the house, "See! see! see! What a fine man! See! see! see! What a fine man!" The scene was very affecting. In that dread moment such a solemn awe fell upon all those about her, as if the Lord Jesus Christ was visibly present. From the uncommon vehemence and unshaken confidence with which she had just before used the prayer of her dying Lord, "My God! my God!" we had not a doubt, but as she was then drinking of the cup of sorrow, after the example of her Lord, (for she was bathed all over in a cold sweat,) so in like manner was an angel sent, or Jesus Himself appeared, to strengthen her in her last agony.

She continued with her eyes fixed, repeating the same words, "See! see! see! What a fine man!" for fifteen or twenty minutes, without intermission,

till her strength was quite exhausted. Then, with a lower voice, she cried, "Come, come, come! Saviour, Saviour! come, come, come!" And gently leaning back, she sweetly sunk into His arms, at half-past five o'clock on Sunday morning, February 15th: having just seen her birth-day, and ended her twenty-ninth year in a world of sorrow, she began with her Lord in paradise that Sabbath which shall have no end. My youngest son, a lovely child, died at the same time, aged eight months; and they were both laid in one grave.

I was now left with my two little boys, one four, the other only two, years old. But the Lord was merciful both to them and me, who in the course of His providence raised us up a kind friend in Miss Roe, the only daughter of the late Rev. James Roe, of Macclesfield, an intimate acquaintance, and twin soul of their dear mother; and for whom both they and I have had cause to be thankful ever since.

As I clearly perceived the Lord had prepared in her another help-meet for me, and one every way calculated to assist me both in my soul and labours, I therefore entered into the marriage state a second time on August 19th, 1784. And now that eight years are nearly elapsed, I have found no cause to alter my judgment, but, on the contrary, have often blessed God for such a yoke-fellow. And it has pleased the Lord to make her useful in her present calling to many, especially those of her own sex. She was in some measure prepared for this, not only by a pious and liberal education from her childhood, but by an early conversion to God. She was deeply awakened, and brought to the saving knowledge of Christ at the age of seventeen; and a short time after that felt the need of a farther work of grace.

For this she earnestly entreated the Lord, who soon came to her help.

“ He spoke the second time, ‘ Be clean,’
And took away her inbred sin.”

From that time, (now eighteen years ago,) though variously tempted and tried in common with others, she has held fast her confidence in God. And from the time I first had the happiness of becoming acquainted with her, I have seen nothing in her conduct inconsistent with her profession. The evenness of her temper, and the cheerfulness of her disposition, as well as her faith and prayers, have greatly contributed to my comfort, when closely exercised and tried from different quarters. She was certainly the especial gift of God to me. And I have not the shadow of a doubt but we shall, after a few more conflicts here, follow her who is gone before, and all spend a glorious eternity together in recounting the wonders of Providence and of grace.

Immediately after our marriage, we hastened to my appointment in Dublin, where we safely arrived, in a Liverpool packet, after an agreeable passage of thirty hours.

I had not been many days in that city before I saw some fruit of my labour, and was fully satisfied that my going there was of the Lord. A few years ago there had been a sifting time in the society. But the troublers of Israel were now removed, and we found the people fully prepared to receive the Gospel of peace. Within the space of six weeks several found mercy, and returned public thanks to Almighty God for a sense of His pardoning love; and many more were deeply awakened.

This we received as a token for good, and the

hopes of all were encouraged to expect a more glorious outpouring of the Spirit. For this a general spirit of supplication was given, and the Lord answered for Himself in a wonderful and glorious manner. At the quarterly lovefeast, Sunday, October 10th, (the first we kept together,) soon after the people began to speak their experience, a poor woman under deep conviction cried aloud for all present to pray for her. We all instantly fell upon our knees, and entreated the Lord on her behalf. In that moment the power of God descended in such a manner, that I believe not one unaffected soul remained under the roof. We continued wrestling in prayer for nearly half-an-hour, and afterwards found not less than seven souls were clearly justified; and many who had received notes of admission on that occasion were deeply awakened, and immediately joined the society. The next evening another was justified under the word, and two more under the last prayer, when also a poor backslider felt that the Lord had healed him. Within the next week following, five others were brought into Gospel liberty; and in the month ensuing, thirteen more. At a lovefeast held in our Gravel-walk chapel, November 18th, eight persons received a sense of pardon, two backsliders were restored, and a stranger, who had got admittance for that time, was truly awakened. About a fortnight after this, we had our band-lovefeast, when two more were justified, and three professed to be at the same time renewed in love. In the beginning of December, one was justified at St. Patrick's church when receiving the sacrament; and one who had been educated a Roman Catholic, but was awakened about six weeks before, received a sense of pardon under the word in our preaching-house; as

did two more, who were convinced of sin at one of the above-mentioned lovefeasts.

On Christmas-day our chapel at Whitefriars was well filled at four o'clock in the morning. We continued in preaching, exhortation, and prayer, till eight. It was a memorable season, and the power of God was manifest in the whole congregation. I cannot ascertain the exact number of souls that were converted to God, but several found a clear sense of His pardoning love shed abroad in their hearts; and many others were awakened, who had remained until that time entire strangers both to God and His people.

The first Sunday in the new year all the society, with several other friends, assembled together to renew their covenant with God. It was a most solemn season. I seldom remember to have felt more of the Divine presence at any time. The language of my heart, and I believe of most present, was, "How awful is this place! Surely it is the house of God: this is the gate of heaven." So it was found to be: three penitents, and two backsliders, were at that blessed ordinance reconciled to God by faith in the blood of Christ. And on the Thursday and Friday evenings following, while the form of the covenant was farther explained, four more received forgiveness of sins; and two others under the preaching, on the ensuing Sabbath.

From that time to the 25th of March, thirty-six more received a sense of pardoning mercy. On Good-Friday two more were justified under the word, and one at the communion in St. Patrick's. On Easter-day many could witness, "Christ is risen indeed." Two received a sense of pardon in the morning, and in the evening four more felt the

power of Him who bruised the head of the serpent, while attending to a sermon delivered from Genesis iii. 15; and, beside these, three others were blessed with a degree of inward liberty they had not known before. We had reason to hope our honoured father, Mr. Wesley, would have spent his Easter with us, but being detained in England longer than he expected, he did not arrive in Dublin until April 11th; before which time three more were pardoned; two backsliders were restored; and two others experienced the great truth, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Mr. Wesley spent about a fortnight in the city; during which time eight persons were justified under his preaching; and before he returned from visiting the country societies, fifteen souls found peace with God.

In the time of our Conference, two others received a sense of pardon, and three more were enabled to believe to full salvation. The whole number of souls brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, in the course of the year past, was a hundred and thirty; and an increase in the society of two hundred members, after excluding all those whom we judged improper to remain.

When I found my fellow-labourer was to be removed, I made it matter of much prayer to God, that He would send me another suitable in every respect. The Lord fulfilled my desire, and gave me Christopher Peacock; a man every way adapted to the work, who was also my son in the Gospel of Christ, and for whom I had a most tender affection. He was a laborious, zealous young man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and his ministry was attended with abundant success. But it pleased Him who seeth not as man seeth, and "whose judg-

ments are a great deep," early to deprive us of this valuable man of God! A putrid fever was commissioned to snatch him away (perhaps from some evil to come) in the midst of his usefulness, and the full vigour of youth. He finished his course February 15th, 1786, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

The affliction and death of one I loved so much, with what I felt for the people in losing such a helper, so greatly affected my bodily health, that, for some weeks, I thought I must have sunk under the burden. Application was made to Mr. Wesley to fill up the vacancy, but in vain, as all the preachers were engaged. This was an awful period; and I greatly feared the glorious revival, which we were now in the very midst of, would at least be impeded. But the death of a preacher so much beloved had a good effect upon the people: we cried to the Lord, and He was better to us than all our fears; and, great as my fatigue was, my health grew better; so did the Lord perfect His strength in human weakness. I was led to consider this was the Lord's work, and that He could carry it on with or without means, or by what instruments He chose. The congregations continued very large, and the prayer-meetings and classes exceedingly lively; and scarcely a week passed in which some were not awakened and joined to the society; and frequently under the word, or at other ordinances, three, four, or five would be found to praise God for His converting grace. And, although they were amazingly happy in the love of Christ, yet there was scarcely any appearance of what is commonly called wildfire; and the work was not only gradual, but deep in most of them who were the subjects of it. The number of persons whom we had reason to believe were savingly

brought to the knowledge of God among us, in the course of the second year, was one hundred and seventy-eight souls, which is forty-eight more than in the former year; and the society amounted to more than nine hundred members.

Having had so considerable an increase, and for so long a time together, it was natural to expect, according to the common course of things, the tide would now begin to ebb. But He who is able to do above all that we can ask or think still continued to awaken sinners in great numbers. Zion's cords were lengthened, and her converts flowed in from every quarter. Several concurring circumstances induced Mr. Wesley to comply with the request of the society in leaving me amongst them another year; and I was favoured with a fellow-labourer of piety, integrity, and good abilities; nor did the Lord give us less fruit than before. When we came to deliver up our charge at the yearly Conference, after thoroughly weeding the classes, and lopping off one hundred and twenty-six members, some for immorality, and others for omitting to meet their class, yet the society had increased to eleven hundred and thirty-six; which made in all an addition of above six hundred souls in three years; and, from the best accounts we could keep, we had every reason to believe, four hundred and fifty-eight of these were savingly converted to God.

In the year 1787 I was stationed for Cork. But before I could enter upon my new appointment, some temporal matters rendered it necessary that I and my wife should first go to Macclesfield. The journey appeared more pleasing, as we were honoured with the company of Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and others of our preachers and their wives, across the

Channel. But although the passage in general was agreeable, yet it was attended with some danger. When we had gone about half way from Dublin to Parkgate, the packet, borne down by a rapid tide from the Welsh coast, suddenly struck upon a rock, where we lay beating vehemently for about an hour. The captain ordered all the women and children upon deck, to try if we could save their lives, expecting every minute the ship would go to pieces. But through the kind providence of God, and after fervent prayer to Him for deliverance, it pleased the Lord to interpose in our behalf, so that we got clear again, though not without some damage to the vessel. However, the pump was sufficient to keep it up, till we reached the port.

Having settled our affairs, we hastened back to Dublin, and from thence to Cork, where, after a journey of nearly seven hundred miles, to and fro, by sea and land, we were gladly received by an affectionate people, who were studious to make our lives comfortable. Some unhappy jarrings the preceding year had considerably injured the work of God; so that in visiting the classes, I found, about three weeks after I arrived, the society reduced from five hundred, to three hundred and ninety-seven members. My fellow-labourer was a pious man and a good preacher; and we had the happiness to see peace and prosperity return. We added a hundred to the society before new-year's day; and have reason to believe upwards of sixty of these were converted to God.

But the progress of the work did not stop here; the Lord continued to prosper His word to the salvation of many souls in that city. And it is probable more good would have been done, but for a few

troublesome spirits, who, under a pretence of standing up for the Church, hurt the minds of many. The Lord greatly blessed His word among the soldiers. Eight sergeants and about forty privates met constantly in class, and some of them became eminent for piety. Notwithstanding every difficulty cast in the way, the society increased to six hundred and sixty; many of whom were much alive to God, and ornaments to their profession when we left them.

About this time one of our travelling preachers, a pious good man, related to me the following instance of the Divine interposition; namely:—A few months ago, as he was travelling on his Circuit, he was met by three robbers; one seized the horse by the bridle, a second clapped a pistol to his breast, and a third caught hold of him to pull him from his horse, all swearing they would instantly have his money or his life. He looked them steadfastly in the face, saying, “Friends, did you pray this morning?” They seemed greatly confounded. But one of them instantly took his watch out of his pocket. Another took off his saddle-bags, and pulled out a knife to rip them open; but he cried, “Stop, friend! there is nothing there but a few religious books, and you are very welcome to have them to read if you please; and as to money, I have only twopence halfpenny,” which he took out of his pocket immediately, and gave to one of them.—“Now,” says he, “shall I give you my coat? You are welcome to anything I have about me: only, I would have you to remember, I am a servant of God, and am now going on His errand. I am going to preach at such a place, and I beg you will let me pray with you before we part; and it may do you more good than anything I have

given to you." At this one of them said to the rest, "We will keep nothing belonging to this man : if we do, vengeance will pursue us." He took the money and returned it with his own hands into his pocket, and insisted that the other should return the watch ; which, after a little hesitation, he put back also : and the third taking up the bags laid them on the horse, and fastened them to the saddle again. He thanked them all for their great civility ; and again renewing his request that they would let him pray with them, he fell upon his knees on the road, and prayed with great power. Two of them went off, but the third kneeled close by him all the time, and was very much affected ; so that there was reason to hope he was resolved to become a new man.

In the year 1790 I was appointed for London. Here I found a numerous, pious, and loving people, who have been accustomed to the Methodist discipline from the beginning, and who, in general, pay attention to our rules, for conscience' sake. We have an extensive field of action in this great metropolis, and plenty of work for more than three times the number of itinerant preachers that have ever yet been employed on this Circuit. When my coming was first proposed to me, I felt exceedingly the importance of such a charge, and should have objected to the appointment, only I was afraid of running counter to the order of God. But I did not foresee the solemn scene which lay before me, or my timidity would probably have prevailed. I had much comfort, both in my labours and family connexions, for nearly seven months. But it is impossible to describe what I felt on the removal of our venerable father to paradise : yet I esteem it the greatest honour ever done me, that I was providentially called

to accompany him in his last journey, and be with him in his latest moments.

Added to this irreparable loss, many other disagreeable circumstances, arising from the general stir occasioned through our whole Connexion by this awful event, made the situation of my brethren and me here very distressing. God alone knoweth how my own mind was exercised from the time of Mr. Wesley's death till the Conference. But when I came to Manchester, and saw what manner of spirit the preachers in general were of, how brotherly love prevailed among them, and that all were resolved to go on in the good old way, the snare of the enemy was entirely broken. I therefore returned to my charge with joy, fully resolved to act in harmony with my brethren, and, by the help of God, to live and die an itinerant Methodist preacher.

It is matter of praise that the great Head of the church is still with us, in a powerful manner. Many are the souls that have been convinced and brought to God amongst us, in and near this city, in the space of eighteen months last past. The congregations are large and attentive; and the societies are increased to upward of three thousand members; which is more by some hundreds than they ever were before. But Satan has not been wanting to stir up a spirit of discord in some: nevertheless, the Lord has graciously overruled it hitherto; so that the people in general are in peace, and the word of the Lord continues to run and is glorified. But to return to my own experience.

I observed in the former part of this account that my justification was particularly clear; so was also the work of sanctification; and as I received the former of these by faith alone, so did I the latter. But

I did not retain the witness of full salvation long. Nevertheless, the Lord has graciously restored it to me at different times; and yet as often have I proved unfaithful, and by giving way to unbelief, have been robbed of my confidence, as it related to that grace. I bless God, I now feel a measure of the genuine fruits of holiness; yet I am clear I have not so much of these as many of the adult children of God do possess. I feel myself utterly unworthy of the least of the mercies of my Lord; but my trust is in His righteousness. I feel a need of recurring daily to the blood of sprinkling, and am persuaded that the Lord will correct and pardon what He sees amiss.

It is now twenty-nine years since I was first convinced of sin; and a little more than twenty-three since I tasted of the pardoning love of God: from which time, (excepting once for a space of about two months,) I have been enabled, through grace, to look up to God as my reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. About twenty-two of those years I have been endeavouring in some small measure to recommend the same blessing to others; and I praise the Lord who hath given me some reason to believe I did not run before I was sent. Yet I have much cause to be ashamed before God, that I have not been more holy and more useful. However, one thing I can say,—the same principle I set out with continues until this day. It was the “love of Christ” which then “constrained me.” And the language of my soul now is,

“My life, my blood I here present,
If for Thy cause they may be spent;
Thy faithful witness will I be,
’Tis fix’d, I can do all through Thee.”

Before I left home to preach the Gospel, I though

an itinerant life was calculated, above all others, to promote a growth in grace, as it cuts off all pecuniary advantages and secular concerns. I still believe God is able to uphold His messengers, and cause His grace to abound towards them. But, upon the whole, few are more critically circumstanced, all things considered, than a Methodist preacher: especially those who are called to superintend in our Connexion. It is a mercy, indeed, if while these are looking to their Lord's vineyard, they do not neglect their own. I often fear this has been too much my own case; and have heartily wished I had less to do with public affairs in the church of God, and that I might spend the whole of my time in recommending the love of Christ to perishing sinners. But one thing I firmly believe,—whatever the Lord calls to, He will qualify for; and that He never calls them who love Him to anything which will necessarily make them love Him less; and therefore, if I have suffered loss in my own soul, I take all the blame to myself. It is certain, every minister of Christ requires, not only much wisdom and prudence, but also peculiar resolution and firmness of mind. He that would faithfully serve Christ and His cause among us, must not seek the favour of men. Nevertheless, “the servant of the Lord should not strive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” It might have been more consistent with my own peace, had I paid more strict attention to this rule in some cases.

I have often brought heaviness upon my mind, by reproving, with too much warmth, what I believed wrong at the time; and perhaps I have incurred the

displeasure of some, more than needful; who, for want of candour, have retained prejudice to their own hurt. But I trust, in future, the Lord will fortify my mind with patience, and give me more of that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things."

My soul at present doth hunger and thirst after a more entire conformity to the image of God. I see nothing so desirable as holiness; and I am resolved, through grace, to recommend it to all, both by example and precept; and I pray God His kingdom may descend with power. I trust the time is near, when the Lord shall appear to "make an end of sin in me,—in all,—and bring in everlasting righteousness; and that the whole earth shall soon be filled with His glory. He who hath promised it saith, "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

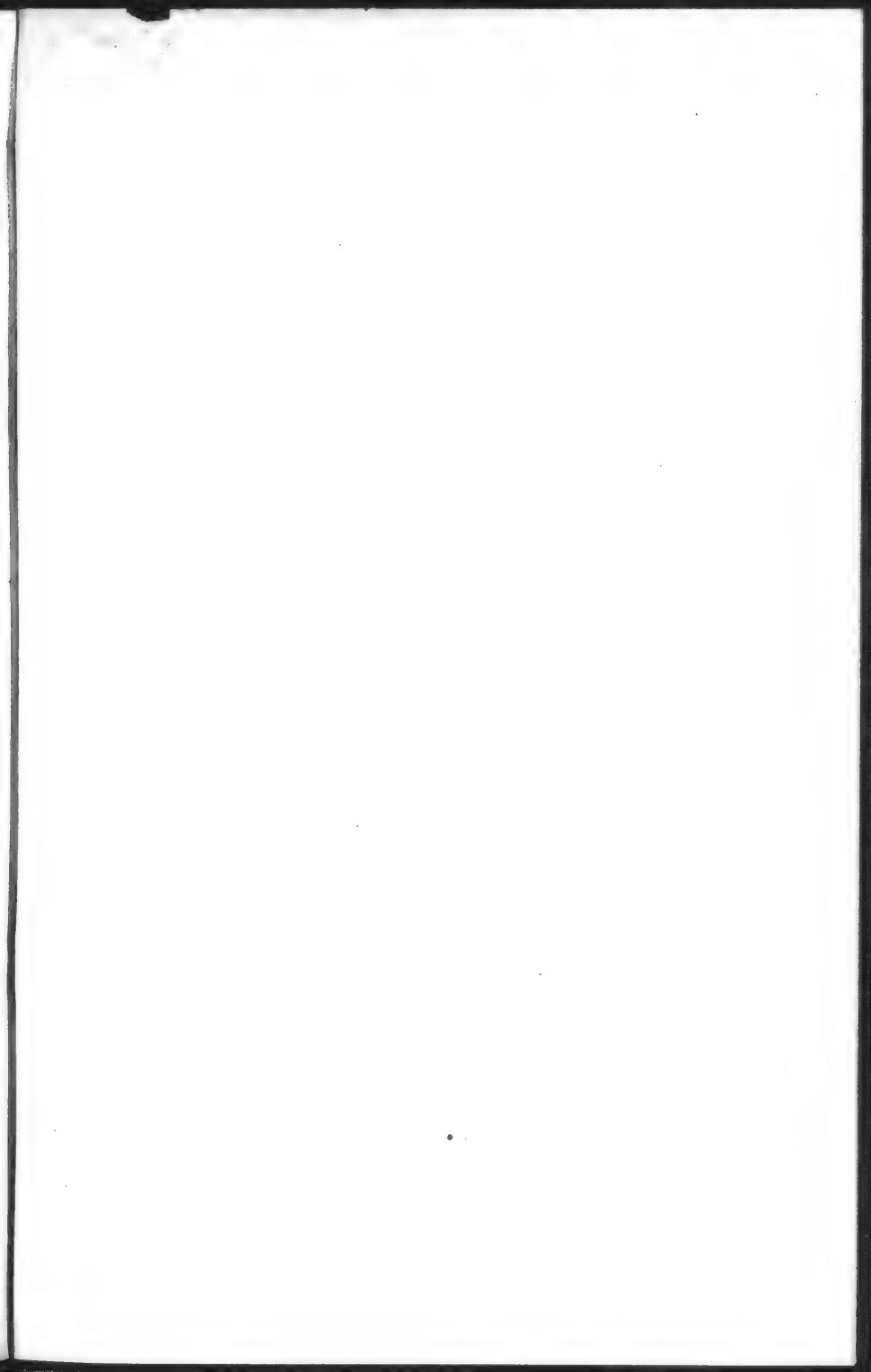
For three years after the conclusion of this narrative Mr. Rogers continued his itinerant labours; and then he was compelled to desist.

In the Minutes of Conference for the year 1807, it is said concerning him: "He possessed a strong and vigorous understanding; and being called at an early age to the ministry of the word, he laboured with considerable success to acquire that knowledge without which zeal, even in a good cause, too frequently goes astray. His sermons were generally rendered impressive and useful, by sound doctrine scripturally and zealously enforced. His latter days were spent in a way consistent with the tenor of his

active life. Being compelled, by multiplied infirmities and afflictions, to retire from the arduous duties of itinerancy, after having travelled thirty-two years, he settled in Guisborough, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, within five miles of the place of his nativity. Here he usually preached twice a week, till he was called to the bosom of his God. An inflammation on his lungs terminated, in ten days from its commencement, his earthly existence. He contemplated the approach of death with that calmness and resignation which characterize the genuine saint: and when his afflicted wife observed to him, seeing him struggling for breath, 'This is hard work, my dear;' he replied, as he could get utterance, 'Good work, good work, once for all!' Thus prepared, his spirit took its flight to paradise, on January 28th, 1807. It is worthy of remark, that until the time of his last illness, he rose every morning at six o'clock, even through the winter, and in his very debilitated state, and devoted an hour to the perusal of the holy Scriptures."

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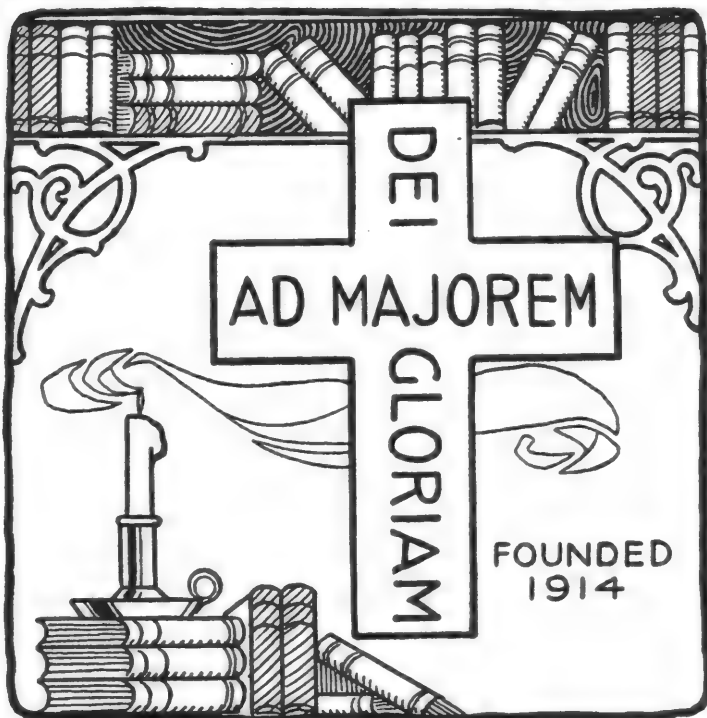
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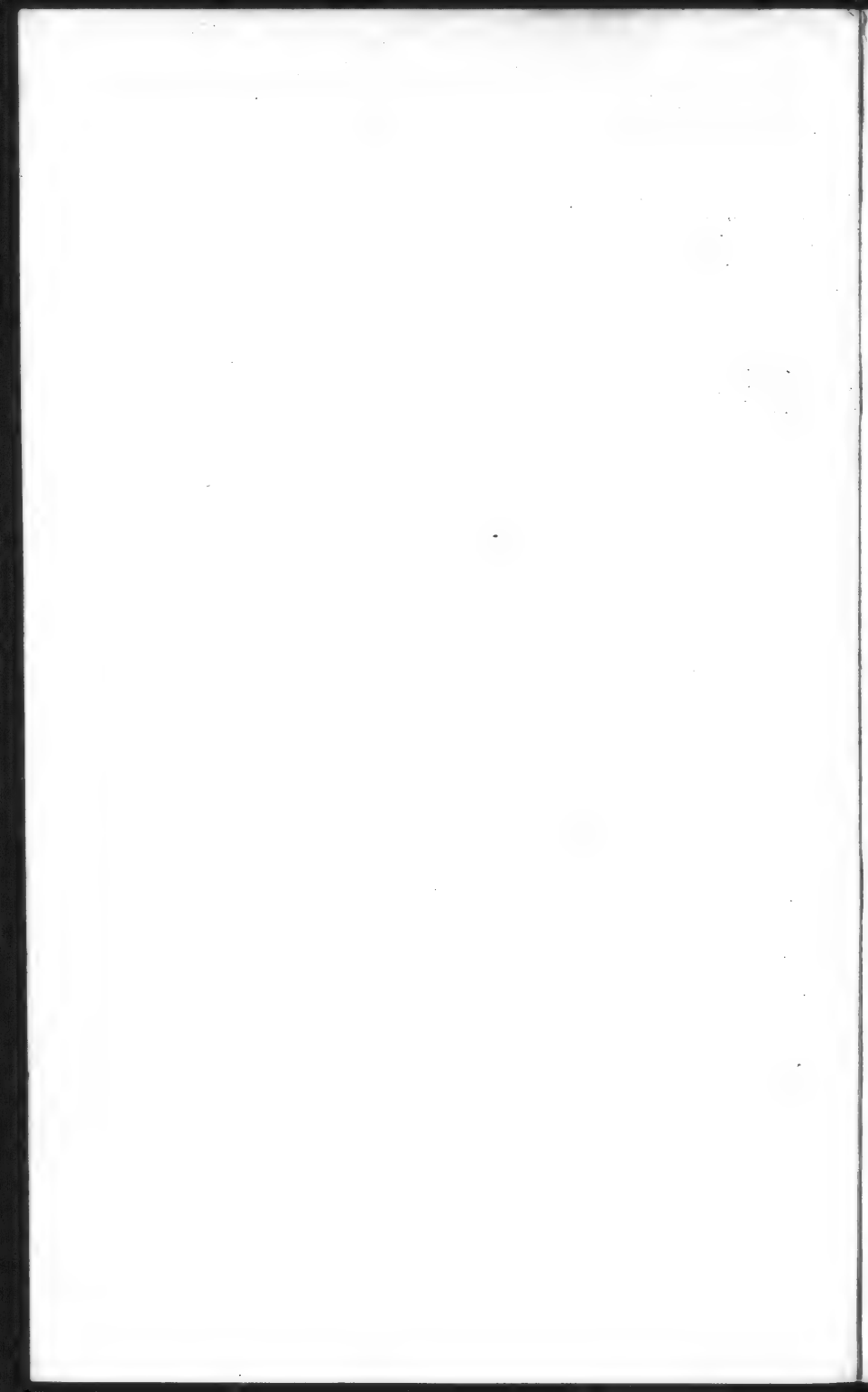
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THE LIVES

OF

EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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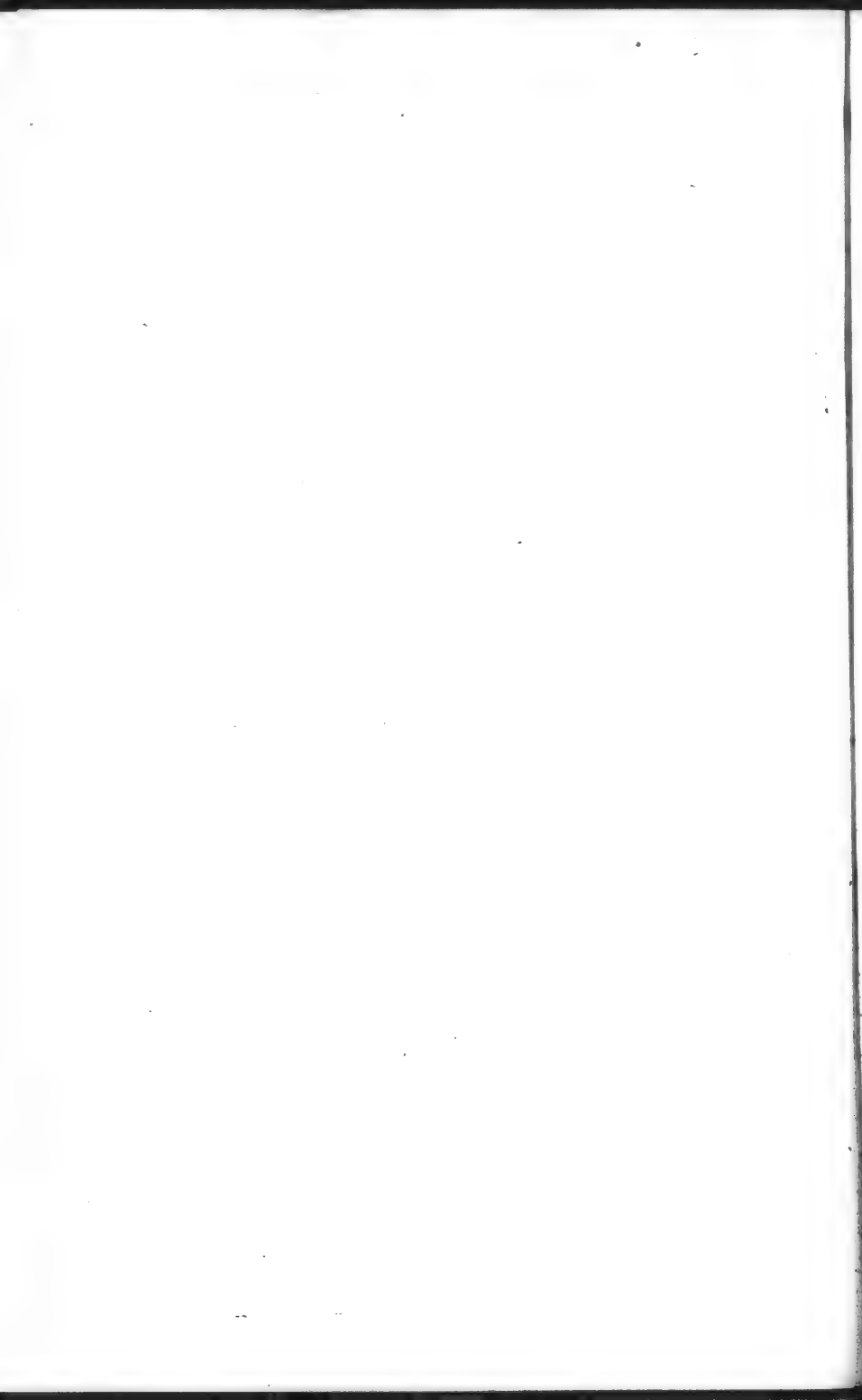
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THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS TAYLOR.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born November 11th, 1738, in the parish of Rothwell, near Leeds, in Yorkshire. I was the youngest of eight children, seven of whom were sons, and the eldest a daughter; so that I was a seventh son. My father was a tanner, and had something considerable to begin the world with; but, proving unfortunate in business, he brought his family into a low condition, especially the younger part; and this fell particularly on me, who was the youngest of all by six years. I have heard much said in praise of my mother; but she died before I was a year old, which, I apprehend, was no small loss to me. I can but just remember my father; so that I was bereaved of both father and mother before I was six years of age. I then fell into the hands of a step-mother for some time, who took care of me, as if I had been her own child. I had, rather early, something of a desire and turn for learning. My father and mother being Presbyterians, I got the Assembly's Catechism off by heart, when I was but

four years old, and said it to the minister. I had some visits from the Divine Spirit very early; but having no one to encourage me, the impressions wore off. My natural temper was active, wild, and very mischievous; and I was so known an offender in little wild pranks, that I have often suffered though not guilty: for when the real delinquent could not be found out, the saddle was laid upon my back. Being of a turbulent, daring cast, I often, when very little, ran into great dangers, by climbing up into high trees, and doing many other things of a like kind. When I was between five and six years of age, as I was walking by the river Calder, and trying how near the edge I could go, the ground gave way, and I fell in where it was very deep. My father and some other men were at a little distance, and heard my cries as I fell in. They ran to me, and soon got me out, and found I was not much worse. I often rambled away, even at that age, so that nobody knew where I was; and being frequently pinched with hunger, I sometimes stole fruit. Indeed I often rambled so far that I knew not where I was; and sometimes, having played some unlucky frolic, I was afraid to return home. One day, being in my wandering humour, I got to a great farmhouse, and being sauntering about, a large fierce bull-dog ran at me, seized me, and got me down, but only tore my clothes: how I was delivered I know not, for I do not remember that any one was near.

Being seven years of age, I contracted the abominable habit of cursing and swearing, which never left me till I was brought to know myself. Being of a passionate temper, (O, could I write this in tears of blood!) I frequently swore in a most dreadful manner; nor did I stick at lying. Yet, young as I was,

I was not without checks from God ; and had I been under the care of any that knew how to manage me, this might have prevented many years of horrid impiety.

When I was between nine and ten years of age, my eldest brother took me to his house, designing that I should be brought up to his business, namely, a clothier. Nothing could have been more detestable to me. I abhorred the name of a clothier ; yea, I heartily despised both him and his trade. Hence I was not very studious to please him ; and this brought what I thought hard usage upon me ; so that after some time I determined to decamp. But the question was, whither should I go ? This I knew not ; for though I had several relations in good circumstances, yet I knew I should meet with a cold reception from them, when they knew that I had run away from my brother. Nevertheless, being determined not to stay, my resolution was to go somewhere.

One morning, having done something amiss, rather by accident than design, I expected to meet with correction ; and, to avoid it, set out, fasting, about the middle of November. It was a hard frost, and I was in a poor habit, having on the worst clothes I had. I wandered all that day, not knowing, nor indeed much caring, what would become of me. I was very hungry, and sorely pinched with cold. I picked the hips from the hedge, and about eight o'clock at night came to another brother's house, eight or nine miles from the place where I set out in the morning. When I came there, though I was cold and hungry, I durst not for some time go in, as I was not in the dress of a visitor. However, at last I ventured in, and my reception was far more agree-

able than I expected : the next day I was treated civilly, so that I began to hope that I was to stay there, which I greatly desired. But, alas ! on the third day I was escorted back to my former quarters, though much against my inclination. Nevertheless, I determined to make my escape again the first opportunity ; which in a fortnight after I effected.

I remembered my nurse used to show great fondness for me : I therefore set out, and marched to her, about nine or ten miles off, in the same garb in which I had fled before. Though I was received tolerably well, yet my dress showed me to be a runaway ; so that the family were at a loss how to treat me. This was not far from that brother's house where I fled before, to whom I now paid another visit ; but here I was treated roughly, and in a few days was, by main force, conducted back to the place from whence I came. Yet I was determined not to stay there. But I thought I should succeed better if I could decamp in a better dress ; and therefore considered how to get some of my better clothes. I got a quantity of them together, and resolved to march by night, seeing there was no probability of doing it by day. This was a somewhat daring attempt for a boy of ten years old. But the clothes were found before night, and the cause suspected, for which I underwent a severe beating. This was one of the worst methods that could have been taken ; for it only confirmed my resolution not to stay. I then thought the likeliest way to effect my escape would be to go on a Sunday, when trimmed in my best fashion. This I therefore resolved upon, and accordingly I put on two shirts that I might have a change ; but unfortunately it was discovered as soon as I came down stairs, so that I was

ordered to strip, and underwent again a severe discipline.

I was now a rather close prisoner, and especially on Sundays. However, one Sunday, being equipped in my best, I waited all day for the opportunity, but could not get my hat. Finding that to be the case, I set out bare-headed, and ran for life; determining that night to go to my old nurse, and then to ramble where I should not be known. I got thither, and was vastly pleased with myself, thinking now I should gain my utmost desire; but while I sat by the fire, who should come riding to the door but my brother, who had taken horse and pursued me; and though it was now night, yet some people had taken notice while it was daylight of a strange boy going in great haste without a hat. By this means he easily guessed where I was gone. Back again I was brought; but with as fixed a resolution as ever, that I would not stay. Being now almost a close prisoner, I was kept in a mean habit; but that was nothing to me. A day or two after Christmas-day, I made my final escape. And now I entered upon a scene of distress indeed! What I endured from hunger and cold, no one knows but myself. My case was singular; I had relations living in affluence, on the right hand and on the left, while I should have been glad of the fragments which their servants, yea, perhaps their dogs, despised. That winter was particularly severe, and it was just in the depth of it. My friends thought to starve me back again to my eldest brother; but I had an unconquerable aversion both to him and his trade. I would just remark here, the impropriety of fixing boys in any business which is so much against their inclinations. It seldom fares better with them than with me, and sometimes proves their ruin.

Finding that nothing could make me submit to return to my eldest brother, the other, to whose house I first fled, took me, and after some time put me to a business that I less disliked, though not quite to my mind. Indeed, my mind inclined more to learning ; but as I could not have my wish, I was willing to comply.

As I grew up, my habits of sin multiplied, and my mouth was fraught with oaths, lies, and deceit. I loved sinful recreations and foolish pastimes to an excess, and soon became a dexterous gambler, especially at cards. Having much pride and little money, I was the more intent upon furnishing myself in that way. I wished to associate with those whose circumstances were better than my own, and strove to equal them in dress and everything else. During this time the Spirit of God strove with me, and sometimes good resolutions took place for a season ; but no sooner did a horse-race or party of pleasure offer itself, than my resolutions died away, and I was worse than ever. Yet I read the Bible, and got much light into many things. I knew that I had not faith ; and when at church, (for I went to church sometimes,) I durst not repeat the Creed : for I knew I was no believer ; and though I could lie at other times, I would not lie there. I likewise knew that I was not born again ; but what the new birth was, I knew not, nor had I any to tell me. I knew that I was far from being what I ought to be ; but I thought I would be better when I was a little older.

When I was about seventeen I heard that eminent servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. The first sight of his countenance struck me. There was an immense multitude, and his voice was like a trumpet. His

text was Rom. xiii. 11 : "It is high time to awake out of sleep." The whole of the discourse was attended with an amazing power, I believe, to many. I am sure it was to me. When he addressed himself to people of several ages in the large congregation before him, and among the rest, to the young people, that took great hold of me. I did not observe anything extraordinary in what he said, as to his matter ; but there was such an unction in his word as I had never felt before. I went home full of good resolutions, now to break off all my bad practices. But, alas ! this also proved as a morning cloud. I was surrounded by such as were utterly abandoned : so I soon returned with the dog to his vomit. Nay, I was worse than ever ; till happening to read the "Pilgrim's Progress," I had another powerful visit from the Lord. But that also remained only a short time ; for my passions hurried me on with surprising impetuosity.

I now left off attending any place of worship, and gave full scope to every wretched disposition. I had a brother living at some distance, who had been awakened some time. But I had long taken my leave of him, as his conversation did not at all suit my inclination. I used to wrangle with him as well as I could, yet this generally left a good impression upon my mind. But now I never came near him, being wholly taken up with things of another kind. In the midst of my career I was very miserable ; and when I was among my jovial companions, and saw everyone around me all joy and gladness, I was often exceedingly melancholy and dejected, though I assumed an air of cheerfulness. And often have I lain down in great terror, thinking, "Perhaps I may awake in hell !" A whim now came into my head to

go into the army. And a party of horse being at this time recruiting in Wakefield, and an acquaintance of mine entering himself a volunteer, I needed but little solicitation to follow his steps. I therefore went to the officer, and, being young and pretty well made, was very acceptable. But, upon trial, I was about half an inch beneath the standard, and therefore he could not take me.

This gave a check to my career in some measure; but I soon returned to my former conduct, abandoned to everything that my age and circumstances could admit of. I cannot say that drinking had much influence over me; yet I have been intoxicated several times: and once, not long before I was awakened, and coming home in the night with others, we had a ferry to cross; while the boat was coming, being bereaved of my senses, I stumbled, and had it not just then come to shore, I should have fallen into the water, and in all likelihood have been lost eternally. I took my leave of getting drunk, and do not remember that this sin ever took me captive again. Nevertheless, in other respects I was as bad as ever,—nay, even worse; for, as I was now grown up, my habits of sin were stronger and more numerous.

As I had ceased to go to any place of worship, I had in a good measure dropped my reading too. Still my conscience was not quite asleep: I had very uneasy moments. But I ran into wild company and diversions as soon as I could; and it was a mercy that I had not more money, for that would have added fuel to the fire; and though nothing is impossible with God, yet, in all human probability, I should never have been saved. Thus lay my poor soul in ruins, when, in the beginning of the year 1758, the

Lord, by a kind chain of providences, was pleased to arrest me in my full career of sin.

There was a young man with whom I had been a companion for several years : he had been in a fever, and during his illness was awakened, and had contracted an acquaintance with the Independents. He persuaded me one Sunday to go and hear their minister, whom he was accustomed to hear : to oblige him I went. The text was, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." While the preacher was describing the maladies of a sick soul, several drunken men came in, and were very rude. Partly with what the minister said, and partly by being struck with their behaviour, I never felt myself so affected in all my life. I plainly saw there must be a change, or I was undone for ever. Yet I cannot say that I was in such terror as might have been expected from so stubborn a sinner. The usual temptation awaited me when I came home ; nor did I wholly escape free. But my desires and convictions continued all that week, and on Sunday I went to the same place of worship again ; and I now plainly saw that I must give up my companions, or I could not be saved. But here was a difficulty : though very young, I had contracted an acquaintance with a young person who was as thoughtless as myself. Being brought up in the same neighbourhood, a fondness had insensibly stolen upon us both. Yet as I was determined to save my soul, and as she had a perfect antipathy to everything of the kind, it was not long before I got disentangled : so that snare was also broken.

I now began to cry to God in private, but was sorely tempted the first time I went to my knees. I was afraid, either that I should drop down dead, or

that the devil would appear to me, if not take me away. I frequently thought that Satan was behind me when I was praying, and was afraid to open my eyes lest I should see him. Indeed it is an exercise which the devil does not love, and which he will use every means to prevent. I began now to contract an acquaintance with the people of the meeting, and was much noticed by them. Several of them had been joined with the Methodists, and gave such an account of them that I had no desire of being acquainted with them. One Methodist lived near me, and had a public meeting at his house every Sunday evening, to which I sometimes went. He was useful to me, and might have been more so; but being more attached to the other people, I kept company with them only. Alleine's Alarm now fell into my hands. It described my case as exactly as if it had been written on purpose; so that I prized it above rubies. I had gracious visits from the Lord, exceedingly sweet to my soul; but no one said, "Now believe, and thou shalt be saved;" so that I was like Samuel, I knew not the voice of the Lord. I began now to meet with a good deal of opposition: my acquaintance laughed me to scorn; though whenever they came near me, the Lord opened my mouth in such a manner, that I could easily put them to silence. My master (for I was not yet out of my apprenticeship) was sour, and much out of humour at times. He, and others, whom I was in some measure under, had no objection to a reformation in me; but now they supposed I was as mad one way, as I had been the other. I continued to press forward, and the Lord continued to visit me with tastes of His love, which were exceedingly precious to me. The time of Wakefield

racers drew on: many expected that my religion would then be at an end, as they knew how passionately fond I was of those vanities: and indeed I was not without fear myself; not that I found the least inclination to anything of the kind; yet I knew not how it might be when the time came. But God took care of that: that fear was of His planting, and was a means of driving me nearer to Himself.

One Lord's-day evening I retired to my apartment for my usual exercise of reading and prayer. While I was calling upon the Lord, He appeared in a wonderful manner, as with His vesture dipped in blood. I saw Him by the eye of faith, hanging on the cross; and the sight caused such love to flow into my soul, that I believed that moment, and never since gave up my confidence. I had not then any particular promise applied; but was enabled to cast my soul upon that atoning sacrifice which I saw was made for my offences. I had nothing to trust in but the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel. But,

“O the rapturous height
Of that holy delight,
Which I found in the life-giving blood;
Of my Saviour possess'd,
I was perfectly bless'd,
As if fill'd with the fulness of God.”

As I had no one near to tell them what God had done for my soul, I was in a short time brought into doubts; but yet I could not give up my confidence. Some time after, the two following scriptures came to me with remarkable power: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly;” (John x. 10;) and, “Blessed and

holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death shall have no power." (Rev. xx. 6.) These two testimonies were indeed words in season, and very precious to my soul. I had some difficulties soon after to grapple with, and at times was brought very low ; but still His grace was sufficient. I often thought, if I was to live at Leeds, where there were such plenty of religious means, it would be almost as the gate of heaven to me : and in particular, I expected great assistance from the fellowship of those who were strong in grace. But God would have me dependent on Himself alone ; for though I went to Leeds, as I was of a shy disposition, I had no fellowship with anyone. I was then tempted to think that there was not much life there : at least, I found very little. It was a very dull time with me : yet I kept close to God in prayer ; and He kept my soul in a measure of peace.

From thence I removed to another place, where there were few that pretended to religion. I feared lest now I should be overthrown ; but I found here two or three Methodists, who had preaching sometimes. I soon got among them, and often found it a blessing to my soul : particularly once in hearing that plain, honest man, Paul Greenwood, whose word left a lasting impression on my mind. But though I met with them at times, yet there was a discord in our manner of speaking, which prevented my close union. From thence I removed to Wakefield, where my first religious acquaintance lived, and with whom I had the greatest union. I kept on in much simplicity, watching unto prayer, and still found reading very profitable ; as indeed it was from my first setting out in the ways of God.

But now a new scene opened : I began to think

that I was called to preach. This had in a measure been pressed upon my mind for some time ; but whether it was a delusion from Satan, or a call from the Spirit of God, I knew not. I dreaded the thoughts of running before I was sent.

I likewise thought that a preacher should have learning, which had been much neglected in me. Yet the impression grew stronger and stronger. I wanted to recommend my Lord to ruined sinners, and thought I could rejoice if I was torn in pieces for so doing. I had neither ease, nor honour, nor profit in view ; but wanted to be an instrument in God's hands of saving souls. The word of the Lord was as a fire shut up in my bones. At the same time I was so conscious of my inability for the work, that I was ashamed to intimate my thoughts to anyone. O, how have I agonized with God, not to suffer me to engage in such a work unless it was His will ; and if it was, to point out my way ! That awful declaration, Rev. xxii. 18, 19, stood seemingly in my way : " For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." It is probable I might understand these words in too general a sense ; but they seemed as if they pointed out a very narrow path for a Gospel minister to go in, and made me cry out, " Who is sufficient for these things ? "

But God answered for Himself from the first of Jeremiah : " Then the word of the Lord came unto

me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." (My very objection!) "But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Now, if any passage was ever applied to anyone by the Spirit of God, surely this was to me. Therefore, I determined to make the attempt: but still I knew not how to set about it; for I was ashamed to declare my mind to any one, from a sense of my absolute unfitness for the work. I had never spoken a word in the way of exhortation, but had frequently prayed in public. At length one or two of my acquaintance asked me if I did not think I was called to preach. With much confusion, I answered in the affirmative.

From that time I determined to make an attempt; but the question was, where? At last I resolved to begin on a Sunday evening, and pitched upon a very profane place to make my first effort; thinking an ignorant place was the fittest for an ignorant preacher. When I came within sight of the village, my spirit was ready to sink within me; not for fear of persecution, though the place was rude enough, but from a sense of the importance of the undertaking. When I came to the place, the heart of the honest man who had invited me failed him; therefore I found his house was shut up. This rather damped me; but an-

other door being immediately set open, I went in. A house-full of people gathered : I stood up, sung a hymn and prayed, but did not give out a text ; for as I had never before opened my mouth to exhort in public, I did not know whether I could say anything or not. But I found assistance in giving a word of exhortation, and I believe it was accompanied with the power of God to many present. I appointed to go again the next Sunday ; and then chose Matthew v. 3 for a text, and found life and liberty in speaking, and a blessing attended it.

The tidings of my preaching soon reached the congregation where I was a hearer ; and happening to have no preacher the following Lord's day, they requested that I would supply the place of one. This was a hard task, for there were several before whom I was much afraid to stand up ; however, I durst not decline the offer. I spoke from John i. 29. Here again my mouth was opened, and my tongue was loosed, so that they objected nothing : undoubtedly they made allowance for a young speaker. Being now in some measure satisfied that I ought to speak in God's name, I embraced many opportunities of going to several places.

I now wanted to improve my little learning ; and, having a trifle of money, I entirely devoted myself to that purpose, not knowing nor caring how I might be disposed of, only I wanted to be useful.

After some time, being destitute of a minister at the place where I was a hearer, they desired I would accept the place : accordingly, I undertook to preach to them a while, till we should see a little farther. The congregation was but small : however, I had the satisfaction to see it increase, and some sinners were convinced. But some of the leading men, having fre-

Reilly

quently veered about from one system to another, seemed now mightily charmed with Antinomianism. Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh's works were highly approved of, and some of Dr. Gill's writings. But a Mr. Reilly was the great apostle among them, on account of his famous Hymn-book, and his Treatise of the Union of Christ and His Church. He came into the country a few weeks; and by him I was much blinded, and for a time all seemed right which he advanced. But in one particular sermon he explained his sentiments freely, when I was fully satisfied that he had sadly perverted the truth. I went to him the next day, and ventured to object against what he had advanced the preceding night. He was not prepared to answer some things which I had objected, but attempted to puzzle me by starting other questions. I gained but little satisfaction from this interview: but still I was rather tinctured with Antinomianism; yet I laboured to live near to God. I earnestly begged to be entirely right, both in principle and practice.

A particular providence now occasioned my coming among the Methodists. I went one time to hear Mr. Whitefield; and Mr. Hanby, who was with him, I was informed, was to preach the next Lord's day. I determined to hear him, as the time did not interfere with our time of worship. When I went, I was amazingly struck to find him in a far more evangelical strain than I expected. I had now and then gone to hear the Methodists before, but was generally disgusted. But the present sermon had quite a different effect. I was now more reconciled to the Methodists than I had been, and began to be acquainted with the people. Reprobation was what I never could digest; and I was not without my doubts

concerning final perseverance, but could not endure to hear it spoken against. But I was most rooted in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, taking it for granted that it was true, because Mr. Hervey had written in its defence.

About this time, being invited to preach in the Methodist preaching-house, I accepted the invitation. This gave great offence to my own people, several of whom were run-away Methodists. Meantime I began to think of joining the Methodists, which my congregation suspected: the heads of them met me, and made me some offers of a temporal kind. But I told them, I thought Providence called me to an itinerant life, and I wished them to look out for one who might suit them. As I knew few of them would go with me, I recommended Mr. Ingham to them, who had formed an itinerancy, and wrote to Mr. Ingham myself on their behalf. He came, and several of the preachers in his Connexion; but as Mr. Ingham's people soon after broke in pieces, the meeting relapsed into its former state of Independency. Being now disengaged, I preached up and down among the Methodists. But being in principle partly a Calvinist, and having been accustomed to read Calvinian books, their phrases were become very familiar to me. However, I aimed at doing good; and when any of the preachers were sick, or had anywhere to go, I readily supplied their place; and I have reason to believe my labour was not in vain.

The summer being arrived, and Mr. Wesley coming into the country, I met him at Birstal. He received me with that affability and condescension for which he was so remarkable. I heard him preach in several places; but I cannot say that I could cordially receive the doctrine of perfection. As the

Conference was drawing near, he advised me to attend it at London. I intimated a desire of spending a year in that place, that I might be fully informed both in the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists. Accordingly, I disposed of some small effects which I had, and set out on foot. When I came thither I expected to undergo a close examination, with regard to my principles, experience, and abilities; and therefore, as I did not in everything agree with Mr. Wesley, it was a doubt with me whether I should not be rejected. But, to my surprise, I was not asked one question relative to any of these things; but was appointed for Wales, and was the only travelling preacher of our Connexion in those parts. This I have sometimes thought was not prudently done, as I was but just come into the Connexion. However, I set out for Bristol, and so into Wales; and truly a rough region it was. A preacher at Bristol said to me, "You seem pretty well dressed, and will hold out well enough for a year; but you must expect nothing to buy any more clothes with when those are worn out." However, I did not regard that; for I was determined to spend and be spent in doing all the good I could. I therefore began preaching out of doors in the first town I came to, which was Chepstow, and determined to do so in every town I came to. Thus I went on till after Christmas, and endured a good deal of hardship from hunger and cold; especially in passing those dreadful mountains from Neath to Brecon, which were nearly forty miles over, and have a most dismal aspect in winter. On these I travelled a long way, and saw neither house nor field, hedge nor tree; nor yet any living creature, excepting here and there a poor sheep or two, nor scarcely any visible track to know my way by. This

was not pleasing to flesh and blood ; but still I determined to go on.

In February there seemed a prospect of much good in a large tract of land called Gower, in Glamorganshire : the inhabitants of it were nearly heathens. I went down into this miserable country in very cold, rainy weather : the people flocked to hear, but we were ill provided with convenient places to preach in. Meantime the rain was excessive, and the cold intense, while we had but little fire ; so that I put on my wet clothes several days successively, yet without any inconvenience afterwards. Here God blessed my word : I collected several societies, and many were at this time brought to experience the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

Towards summer, a circumstance seemed to open my way sixty or seventy miles farther down to Pembroke-shire : I went thither, and preached at Carmarthen in my way. Afterwards I preached at Pembroke, and had multitudes to hear, who behaved in a respectful manner, and generously paid all my expenses ; for at this time there was no provision made for missionaries. I preached in several places round Milford-Haven, and had many to hear. Indeed, the prospect was so promising, and the people were so loving, that I was almost tempted to embrace their pressing invitations to stay with them. But I thought that would be a betrayal of my trust ; so I returned to my own Circuit, promising that I would return again after the Conference was over. When I returned into the old Circuit, I was seized with a slow fever. I believe it was in some measure occasioned by fatigues. But Providence was kind to me : for though I was in a poor place, where little

assistance was to be had; yet, by the blessing of God, I did without it. Mr. Mather then came from Staffordshire, to help me to put things into some order, and went with me through the rambling Circuit; and indeed his advice has been of use to me ever since.

I attended the Conference at Leeds, in August, 1762, and was sent back into Pembrokeshire. But though I had three hundred miles to ride, and a new work to begin, I had nothing allowed me either to take me thither, or support me when I got there. But of this I took no care; and, through a kind Providence, I wanted nothing. Another preacher being sent into the old Circuit, I had my full scope in the new one. Things turned out beyond my expectation. The Lord blessed the word. I several times visited the societies in Gower which I joined the year before; for the other preacher had not time. I endured a good deal of hardship and danger in passing and repassing from Gower to Pembrokeshire in winter; there being several dangerous waters to cross. Sometimes a stranger is surrounded by the tides, whilst he is crossing the sands, and knows nothing of the matter till he finds himself hemmed in on every side. This I once narrowly escaped. I had once a long day's journey, when, coming to one of the ferries, which is a mile over, I found the boat was broken. I had nine miles to ride up to Carmarthen, where the bridge was, and nine miles on the other side back again; this added eighteen miles to my journey. I just got over the last ferry in the evening; but which was my road I knew not, and the people could not or would not speak English. But they pointed me up a dark lane, which at length brought me to a wild moun-

tain. It being quite dark, I knew not which way to go; for there was no road. At length my mare sunk down in a bog, and stuck fast. Here I was at a loss what to do; for if I left her, it was ten to one if I should find her again. As I knew not which way to go for help, I shouted till I was weary; but to no purpose. I pitied the poor creature, that after so long and fatiguing a journey, had such a stable at night.

After some time I took hold of the bridle, and pulled her head; being strong, she made a vigorous struggle, and got her foreparts above ground, and, after taking breath, made another stout spring, and got entirely free. At this I was not a little glad; but, not knowing the ground, I judged it safest to lead her after me. I was weary, cold, and hungry; and where or when my journey should end, I knew not. At length I discovered something like a house, at which I was exceedingly glad: but my joy was soon over; for, making up to it, I found it an old ruin uninhabited; so my poor weary companion and I set out again.

At last I saw a man, and prevailed upon him, for sixpence, to show me the way from the common, which was not a quarter of a mile; for it happened that I had come the direct road. But when I came to the place I aimed at, some time in the night, there was nothing to eat for either man or horse. I got the poor beast to a farm-house at some distance. My lodging was but indifferent, yet very agreeable, as I was weary; and I know not that either I or my beast ailed anything after we had got into good quarters.

The Lord prospered my undertaking in Pembroke-shire; so that by Christmas I had eight or nine

societies ; and as the people were remarkably loving, my time went on comfortably. It is true I often met with things that were not agreeable ; for I was continually ranging about to beat up fresh ground, and Wales is not the most pleasing part of the world for a stranger to wander in, especially on the errand which I was upon. But I cared very little about the matter, provided I could see some fruit of my labour. I could rest upon straw, when needful, and be well content.

A little before the Conference, I went to Tenby, where the people had held out stoutly for their master, and boasted that no preachers had ever come there, neither should they, but at the price of their lives. I was determined to make the attempt. So a few friends accompanied me, one Sunday morning, from Pembroke. We arrived there by eight o'clock, and, after putting up our horses, went to the Cross. I gave out the Hundredth Psalm. The people flocked together amain, and all behaved very well. But they presented a strange figure ; some looking through their windows, naked as they had jumped out of bed ; some running to the Cross with part of their clothes on. After singing and praying without interruption, I gave out my text, and all was quite still. By and by I observed a person with an air of importance, walking up and down, who, I soon learned, was the mayor. He would fain have got some of the crowd to pull me down ; but all the people stood staring with their mouths and eyes open, as if they would have devoured every word. Finding the town's people took no notice of him, he addressed a couple of sailors who stood by themselves ; desiring that they would take that fellow down. But the honest tars answered in their own

style, "The devil shall take him down for us." He then fetched out the Riot Act, and came into the midst of the crowd to read it: so I ceased speaking until he had concluded. I asked if he had done reading. He said he had. "Well, then," said I, "I will begin again:" so I went on, and concluded in peace. After sermon the constables came to fetch me before the mayor. When I came thither, I found the rector, the curate, and the town-clerk there. Mr. mayor insisted that I had been making a riot. I denied the charge, and desired him to prove it. He said, he would not stand proving the matter with me; but, says he, "Show your authority, or to prison you shall go." I told him, "I have been preaching, and have a licence so to do;" which I then produced. This being read, "These justices,"* said he, "are Methodists, every one of them. Well, but is this all you have to show?" I answered, "Yes." "Then," said he, "you must go to prison. Let his mittimus be made out." For which purpose, pen, ink, and paper were brought. But he was informed there was an Act of Toleration. This was produced; in which it was asserted, that a qualified preacher might preach in either house, field, or other place. This seemed to puzzle Mr. mayor a little; and he thought it best to dismiss me, on condition that nothing of the kind might be attempted again. I told him I intended to preach again at two o'clock; which I did to well-nigh all the town, and had no interruption. I went again that day fortnight, and preached three times, and had very large congregations each time. Presently after I left the country, and must confess I cannot help blaming those who came after me for not following the blow. I was

* The justices who signed the licence.

much importuned to stay in the country. However, I tore myself from them, and hastened to the London Conference.

From thence I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland, and made the best of my way thither. As I sailed up the Bristol Channel, I looked with a wishful eye to Pembrokeshire; and if I could have got on shore, I should have been tempted to stay with the people. But we stretched over for Dublin, where I stayed near a fortnight, and preached with some degree of satisfaction, especially in the Royal Square, belonging to the barracks, where many of the soldiers attended and behaved remarkably well, as they do in every place in Ireland. As we seldom preach in country-places in Ireland, the people being generally Papists, and often strangers to English, except in the north; so in towns there are always soldiers quartered, and generally some in our society. From Dublin I set out for Castlebar, quite on the other side of the kingdom, preaching at Drumcree, Athlone, Augrim, and Holy Mount by the way, and found the people very hospitable and loving, as they are indeed all over Ireland wherever I have been; so that, if in everything the Irish excelled as they do in freedom and hospitality, we might give it its ancient name, "a nation of saints." Being arrived at Castlebar, my principal place, I found myself not only in another country, but amongst another sort of people. Instead of having crowds following me, as in Pembrokeshire, I was shut up in a little dark corner, and had but three small congregations in the Circuit: and being entirely surrounded by Papists, there was no probability of enlarging my sphere of action; for they neither understood English, nor durst they come to hear, if they had been ever so

desirous. Here I was warmer than wise, in my zeal against the Papists; and had it not been for three troops of dragoons who lay in the town, and were constant hearers, I know not but I should have paid for my rashness. It is certainly beginning at the wrong end with the generality of Roman Catholics, to attack their principles, as this raises prejudice in them immediately, and then all reasoning is at an end. If we mean to do them good, it must be by lovingly introducing the experimental and practical parts of religion. I once preached out of doors, at a place called Drumasnare, at the time of a Papist visitation, and a large concourse of people: here I imprudently entered into the controversies of priestly absolution, purgatory, transubstantiation, praying to saints, &c. This was ill-timed, and only stirred up rage and indignation. Some of my friends were alarmed, expecting that some mischief would ensue, either openly or secretly; and I was not without apprehension: but I received no harm, and learned to be wiser; for I see we must not provoke those whom we intend to profit.

Finding I could not enlarge my bounds of preaching, I determined to improve my little learning. I did not like to be at the mercy of every pretender, with regard to the original Scriptures, and was much excited to aim at a little more knowledge by reading Mr. Wesley's Address to the Clergy. I saw every reason assigned for their knowing Greek and Hebrew was doubly applicable to me. Indeed it was my desire from the time of my first engaging in the work of God, to show myself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Very providentially, there was a grammar-school

in Castlebar, in which some gentlemen's sons were instructed in the learned languages. The master very freely assisted me; so that I preached night and morning, devoted the forenoon to study, and spent the afternoon in visiting the sick, and reading English; and the evening I spent with my friendly schoolmaster. This has proved very useful to me ever since. Some good was done during my stay here: the numbers in the societies were a little increased, and the congregations much enlarged.

From hence I removed into the Athlone Circuit. I still attended to my studies, but had not the same opportunities as before. I here got a sore illness by lying in a damp bed,* so that my speech and hearing were well-nigh taken from me. But this was a necessary visitation, and what my carelessness deserved. However, when I was able, I preached abroad in most of the towns, and I hope not in vain; though I did not live so near to God as I ought to have done.

My next remove was to Cork. Here a blessed work was begun under that indefatigable servant of God, Mr. Penington. It did not decrease during my stay, but increased more abundantly. I preached abroad in every part of the city. Prayer-meetings were regularly kept up. I met the class-leaders every Saturday night, and appointed each his work for the ensuing week. Strict discipline was observed. Not a class-leader or steward was permitted to enter the society-meeting without producing his ticket; and the work of the Lord prospered on every side. In this agreeable manner things went on, when Mr. James Morgan came to help me. He was the older

* This, I believe, has been the death of several of the preachers; and yet some of the people are not careful in this point.

preacher, though the care of things was, in some measure, committed to me. I could soon see a party gathering against me, who did not like that strictness of discipline. At length he insisted on a person's being admitted to the lovefeasts and society-meetings who would not meet in class. To this I could not consent. I insisted on poor and rich meeting in class, or not to have any privilege of meeting in society. Letters were sent to Mr. Wesley, and his answers were construed in their favour. However, I stood to what I saw was right. They then alleged, her husband would not let her meet in class. To cut off this pretence, I went and asked him if he did hinder her. His answer was, "She is at her own liberty." Then Mr. Morgan was obliged to submit. This, however, caused a shyness betwixt him and me, which cast a damp upon the work. Yet I kept up, at all events, the same discipline as long as I stayed at Cork.

At the beginning of the year 1765 I removed to Limerick, where I found matters in a very different state from what I found them in Cork. The people were very languid and lifeless, and my own spirit was rather irritated; so that I did not see much fruit, except at a place called Killfinnen. In July I came over to England, to the Manchester Conference. After seeing some of my relations in Yorkshire, I set out for Scotland, preaching at Keighley, Blackburn, Kendal, and Cockermouth, and so on to Dumfries, the first town of note in Scotland. Resting on the Sunday at Dumfries, I preached in the ball-room, the day being rainy, so that I could not preach out of doors. Here I was much importuned to stay; but my destination was to Glasgow. When I arrived, I entered on a scene which I had never witnessed

before. The winter was at hand ; I was in a strange land ; there was no society, no place of entertainment, no place to preach in, no friend to communicate my mind to. I took a private lodging, and gave out that I should preach on the Green, a place of public resort, hard by the city. A table was carried to the place, and at the appointed time I went, and found two bakers' boys and two old women waiting. My very soul sunk within me. I had travelled by land and by water near six hundred miles to this place ; and behold my congregation ! I turned upon my heel to go away. No one can tell but they who have experienced it, what a task it is to stand in the open air to preach to nobody ! more especially in such a place as Glasgow. However, at length I mounted my table, and began the singing, which I had entirely to myself. A few more kept creeping together, all seemingly very poor people, till at length I had about two hundred hearers. But this was poor encouragement. The night following, I had a more promising congregation ; yet nothing to what I expected. The third night we had heavy rain. This quite cast me down again. O, what a day of distress was that ! I had not learned in all states to be content. The enemy assaulted me sorely, so that I was ready to cry out, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God pitied my weakness : the next day cleared up, and I was never prevented from preaching out of doors for eleven or twelve weeks after.

On the Saturday evening I had a large congregation, and on Sunday morning a larger ; but such a one on Sunday evening, as I do not remember ever seeing before, excepting one. I mounted my table, but was quite too low still. I set a chair upon it,

but was quite too low still. I then mounted upon a high wall, and cried aloud, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." All was still as night, so that I conceived great hopes of this opportunity. But when I had done, they made a lane for me to walk through the huge multitude, while they stood staring at me; but no one said, "Where dwellest thou?" I walked home much dejected.

One great obstacle in my way was, a new edition of the "Eleven Letters," ascribed to Mr. Hervey, had just come out, prefaced by a minister in Edinburgh, a man much esteemed in Scotland. These Letters fully answered their design. They carried gall and wormwood wherever they came. So that it was a sufficient reason for everyone to keep his distance, because I was connected with Mr. Wesley. I laboured to keep as clear as possible of controversy, dwelling chiefly upon repentance, faith, and the new birth. Indeed, as I then leaned much both to the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and final perseverance, I had no temptation to bring in controversy.

I soon found that persons may easily learn to cover over several Gospel topics,—such as original sin, the offices of Christ, His being the only Saviour, and the like,—and yet be haughty, self-sufficient, unbroken-hearted sinners. This I saw, and levelled all my powers against it. I soon found their pharisaic hearts could not brook it. Hence I drew their resentment upon me, and plenty of lies and calumnies were soon spread abroad.

I continued preaching night and morning, when opportunity offered; and tried much to procure a

place to preach in, as the winter was now come on. I believe I was disappointed in ten or twelve different places. I sold my horse; and a preacher who passed through Glasgow, to Ireland, having his horse lamed, and little money left, I spared about three guineas to help him on his way. This brought my stock into a small compass; and having everything to pay for, I was reduced to a short allowance. I paid three shillings per week for my room, fire, and attendance; but I really kept a very poor house. I confess that I never kept so many fast-days, either before or since. But how to keep up my credit was a difficulty; for I was afraid my landlady would think me either poor or covetous. I frequently desired her not to provide anything for dinner; and a little before noon, I dressed myself, and walked out, till after dinner, and then came home to my hungry room, with a hungry belly. However, she thought I had dined out somewhere; so I saved my credit.

About this time a poor man was executed for the murder of his wife. I attended him several weeks in the prison, and likewise at his execution, which had a circumstance I never saw before: they chopped off his right hand, before his execution, with a great axe, just as a butcher would chop a piece of beef with a cleaver. It is the law of Scotland, for every murderer to have his right hand struck off before his execution, and to be stuck upon the pole where he is gibbeted. As I had reason to believe that the Lord had plucked him as a brand from the burning, I published a short account of his case. It is amazing what a cry this raised up against me, to say that God had mercy on such a sinner! Scurrilous papers were cried up and down the streets

against me, filled with lies of all sorts. Nay, so zealous was some poor creature, that he began publishing weekly numbers, and had no better subject than myself. My case was now deplorable: I had famine within doors, and plenty of reproach without. And yet I might have prevented it all; for just at this time there was an elegant place of worship building, called a kirk of relief. Formerly the inhabitants of Scotland had the privilege of choosing their own ministers: of this privilege they are now debarred, and the gift of a living lies in the hands of a patron. But frequently the parishioners unite, build a place of worship, which they term a kirk of relief, and call a minister themselves; leaving the old kirk to the patron and his friend. This was the case in Glasgow: the church was built, but they had not chosen their minister. One of their leading men was one of my greatest intimates. He said, he would engage me three hundred votes, which would be a majority. This was an alluring bait, considering my present circumstances; a place of one hundred and forty pounds per annum, with honour and credit, on one hand, and hunger and contempt on the other. But I thought it would be betraying the trust which was reposed in me. Afterwards some of that party desired a meeting with me; but I so satisfied them, that I heard no more from that quarter.

At length I procured a place to preach in, and my hearers furnished it with a pulpit and seats. I saw now a little fruit of my labour: as I had a place to preach in, and a little society, which kept continually increasing; some of whom stand to this day, while others are gone to rest.

I observed above, how kind Providence was in regard to the weather; for though it was a remark-

ably wet season, yet I never was but once prevented from preaching abroad till the middle of November, and then only one night : so that it became a kind of proverb among the people, "If it rain all day, it will be fair at night for the *load*," that is, the lad, "to preach on the Green."

One little circumstance I cannot omit. Some time after my arrival at Glasgow, I found myself at a loss what to do in respect to the singing, having but a poor voice for this exercise ; and as the people knew nothing of our hymns, I was obliged to sing the Scotch psalms. One of my hearers told me, if I pleased, he would be my precentor, that is, my clerk, to lead the psalms. At this I was glad ; so we went on pretty well : but at length he made a demand of thirteen shillings and fourpence for his work, which was just fourpence a time. This did but ill suit my circumstances. However, I paid him his demand, and dismissed him and the Scotch psalms together. I now began to sing our own hymns ; the people liking them right well ; and in a little time I taught them to sing several of our tunes.

After the society was increased to forty or fifty, some of them began to inquire how I was maintained. They asked me if I had an estate, or some supplies from England. I told them I had neither ; but having sold my horse, I had made what little I had go as far as I could. I then explained our custom to them. I told them of the little matter we usually received from our people. The poor souls were much affected, and they very liberally supplied my wants, as also those that came after me. I stayed with them till the middle of April, and then bade them an affectionate farewell ; leaving about seventy

persons joined together. Though I had many trials in Glasgow, yet I had much opportunity to pursue my study; and the privilege of the college library was of singular advantage to me. But I own I did not live so near to God, the latter part of my time, as I did in the beginning. I seldom enlarge my acquaintance, but I find it enlarges my temptations: so I found cause to cry out, "Lord, pardon my trifling and want of deep seriousness!"

From hence I went to Edinburgh, and in my way turned aside to Stirling, where I spent three nights. On the Sunday, preaching under the side of an old uninhabited building, some young men got into the inside, and, going up stairs, threw off a number of the slates; but, though they fell just by me, I was not hurt, nor anyone else. Leaving Stirling, I came to Edinburgh, where the brethren received me gladly. The Octagon was not quite finished, but the congregation was miserably small. Several things had concurred to reduce both the society and congregation, particularly Mr. Hervey's Letters. I had soon the pleasure of seeing the congregation increase, yet not as I could wish; the place was never above half filled, even on Sunday evenings. I was therefore determined to take a new step.

The Castle-hill being the place of general rendezvous for all sorts of people, after they came out of the churches, about twelve o'clock, I was determined to preach there just at that time. It was disagreeable to stand up bareheaded in the blazing sun; but this I regarded not. My method was to preach in the Octagon in the morning, on the Castle-hill at noon, in the High-School yard at four o'clock, and in the Octagon at six in the evening. As I generally spake with all my might, this was rather too hard

for my constitution. However, by this means, I got the Octagon well filled on Sunday evenings, and helped the society a little. In order to establish societies betwixt Edinburgh and Glasgow, I preached in several towns which lie between, such as Burrowstounness, Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Killisyth; but I fear with little fruit. The Scots are naturally shy, and suspicious of strangers; and anything in religion that appears new, or not agreeing with their established forms, they are exceeding jealous of. Hence class-meeting has the appearance of novelty, and has often been suspected to border upon the Popish auricular confession of sins, though a different thing: hence many in Scotland have been startled at it, and very loth to engage in it.

In October I left my much-esteemed friends at Edinburgh, and removed to Aberdeen. In crossing the Forth, which is seven miles from Leith to Kinghorn, I know not that I was ever nearer being drowned. There were several friends from Edinburgh, and, it being a fine calm morning, the regular passage-boat being gone, we hired a small pinnace; but when we were about half-way over, such a sudden squall of wind arose, that we were in danger of being upset every minute. But by a merciful providence we got safe over. That evening I arrived at Dundee, and preached three nights, having the place well filled with attentive hearers each night. At Aberdeen I met with a loving people; but, as the winter was at hand, I had no opportunity of enlarging my sphere of action. I was therefore determined to apply myself to study, and to live nearer to God than I had done. But a family residing in Aberdeen which came from Leeds, I immediately contracted an acquaintance with them;

and this led me into company, which was a great loss to my soul. After I had spent some time, being fully convinced of my danger, I judged it best to flee; and a ship being ready to sail for Leith, I went on board immediately, taking an abrupt leave. Having scarcely any wind, we had a very tedious passage, as we could make but little way; but I never was with such a ship's company before. Everyone on board, both sailors and passengers, came upon deck to prayers, and all kneeled down, except the man at the helm. After a slow passage we reached Leith. I hastened to Edinburgh, anxious to see my friends; the generality of whom were glad to see me.

As soon as the season would permit, Mr. Olivers being my colleague, we took our station on the Castle-hill, hoping for the same success which I had the last summer. But a circumstance happened which hindered our usefulness.

There had been, a few years before, a young man in that college, who met in our society. He appeared to be much alive to God, and was the leader of one of the classes. He had been in England for some time, had got ordained, turned predestinarian, and affected a popular character. He now came to Edinburgh, partly to do us harm, and partly for another purpose. In the latter design he failed; but in the former he was too successful. He would not preach in our place, nor even come to hear us; but preached at our usual times, and by this means drew away much people from us. There was neither matter nor method in his preaching; but he was loud and quaint; so he was much admired. It has fared with him as it has done with several others. He first turned Calvinist, and then to nothing. It is

plain, a man with little parts and little religion may do that harm in a short time, which men of far greater parts and deeper religion cannot repair in a long period. For though my colleague was a man of good abilities, and did all in his power, as well as myself, yet could we not either prevent or remove the harm which one shallow young man was doing.

During my stay in Edinburgh this season, my time went on but heavily. I saw little good done; the congregations were small, and the society was very cold, and did not increase. It is really very heavy with me when I see God's work at a stand; everything has but a gloomy aspect; my spirit sinks, and my soul is pained within me.

In September, 1767, I left Edinburgh, and at Dunbar was seized with an obstruction in my bowels, which seemed to threaten me with a final period to my feeble endeavours. I do not remember ever passing so dreadful a night. Being very providentially in the house of Dr. Hamilton, he took the right method with me, and in a few days I was enabled to set forward, though it was some time before I was free from the effects of that attack. The kind and genteel usage I received both from the Doctor and Mrs. Hamilton will not soon be obliterated from my grateful heart.

I preached at Alnwick, Newcastle, Darlington, and Knaresborough, and so on in divers parts of Yorkshire, being glad to see my native country and former acquaintance; and they appeared equally glad to see me. Blessed be God for Christian fellowship, and for Christian friendship! It has a tendency to soothe some of the rugged paths which we meet with in this wilderness, and perhaps may increase our gratitude in the bright realms of eternal day.

Before I dismiss Scotland, I would just take notice, that I have reason to bless God, some good was done by my poor endeavours : some sinners were brought to God ; my labours, in the general, were acceptable ; and the people gave me many proofs of their friendship, although my entrance among them was unpromising. On the other hand, I see much cause for humility and deep self-abasement. I see that I might have managed my mission abundantly better ; I really was neither so holy nor steady as I might have been. I have reason to cry to the Lord, and also to apply to the blood of sprinkling, or I should be an outcast from God, and an heir of eternal misery.

This makes me now with bended knees,
Thy daily care implore ;
Confine me, Lord, if it Thee please,
And let me rove no more.

O cause the golden girdle, love,
To bind my heart to Thine ;
Let me Thy little captive prove,
Become Thy spoil Divine.

I'll bless my sweet captivity,
The cord that binds me fast
To Him who living loved me,
And died for me at last.

My next remove was to Chester, where a change took place of such consequence to me, that I should be much wanting in gratitude to a kind Providence if I passed it over in silence. I found it was expedient for me to marry, but it appeared a matter of great importance. Only two things in all my life had given me greater concern ; namely, my acceptance with God, and my call to preach. What I wanted was, a person of grace, of good understanding,

of a good natural disposition, (for my own is violent,) and one who had been well educated. I had contracted an acquaintance with one while in the city of Cork, in whom I had reason to believe the above properties met; she was descended from an eminent French Protestant family, whose grandfather, among many others, had fled from the rage of Louis XIV., and had left his estate behind, only taking what effects he could carry along with him. She was early bereaved of her father, and not long after of her mother. My great objection was, the bringing of a person of her delicate constitution and education into such a way of life as she must expect if she became my wife. This I feared would be more than her spirits could bear. Besides I found a great aversion to bring any more burdens upon the societies; for she was left an orphan, and her affairs were very ill managed. Yet, believing it to be the will of God, I at length ventured upon this important step; for which I have abundant reason to bless God, and hope I shall do it for ever.

Here I became acquainted with that amiable pattern to all young females, I mean Miss Gilbert, who was born in the West Indies, and came to England to finish her education, and also to finish her life in the bloom of her days. She kept a daily journal for several years; and at the age of seventeen, a fever sent her to Abraham's bosom. I visited her in her illness, and was therefore a witness of that sweet resignation and consolation with which she was favoured. At the request of her friends I preached a funeral sermon on the occasion of her death from the affecting words of our Saviour, Luke xxiii. 28: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

The chapel was much crowded, and the congregation much affected. I printed the sermon, which I hope has been a word in season to many a troubled soul.

Before the end of the year, I preached one Sunday morning in the market-place at Salop, and met with no other molestation than a few clods and small stones. I gave notice that I would preach again in the evening, at a place called the Quarry. "We will be ready for you," said the people: and so they were; for when I drew near the place, there was a little army gathered together with clubs. They did not stay till I came to the place, but came on furiously, so that I was soon hemmed in on every side. They seemed a little at a stand when I demanded to know what they wanted. However, they rallied; and though they did not strike me, they kicked me about to some purpose. By degrees they hurried me into the town, up to the door of a house which belonged to a justice of the peace. I thought there might be something providential in this; and took the liberty of going in to desire his protection. The justice was at the coffee-house; but I sent for him. The mob by this time had filled the street, and were roaring like lions. At length the justice came. He said, "Tell me who have hurt you; and I will send for a warrant for them;" and after a little incoherent talk fairly shoved me out of doors into the midst of the mob. Providence held them from striking, or a very few blows might have ended the business. I likewise kept on my feet; for if I had once been down, there was no likelihood that I should have risen again. But I was covered with dirt from head to foot. All the filth they could scrape up was thrown, and when I attempted to

turn my face on one side, I met it on the other. Which way to go I knew not; nor indeed could I go any way, but just as my masters drove me. At length I heard some cry out, "For shame, for shame!" This occasioned a quarrel among themselves. Meantime, an honest man opened his door: so I slipped in, and went out by a back way, not much hurt, but dreadfully bedaubed; so that I really "needed much washing to be touched."

The next year, the society in Dublin being in much confusion, Mr. Wesley desired me to go thither. My affectionate partner was in a very unfit situation for crossing the water. The ship was so crowded, that we could obtain no beds, though they had promised one to us; yet they were taken up before we got on board; so that it was no small grief to me to see my dear partner three days and nights without a place where to lay her head. When we got thither, I was in great hopes, for several weeks, that the desired end would be accomplished. But my former antagonist coming to Dublin, who had been the occasion of the confusion, I had all my work to do over again. But he is gone, and I hope to paradise. He occasioned my path to be very rough in Dublin.*

Notwithstanding some cross things, I met with many friends, who showed themselves very affectionate, and did everything in their power to strengthen my hands, to help me in whatever I stood in need of, and to comfort my afflicted wife. The Lord reward them for their kindness in that great day.

* Though it was my misfortune not to agree with Mr. Morgan, yet there were many excellent things in him, such as I wish to imitate; and my reason for mentioning the above, is to caution myself and others against discord.

While we were there, my wife was delivered of her first child; and not being skilfully treated, she had such a complaint in her breast as was supposed to be a confirmed cancer. The anguish which I saw her daily in was such an affliction to me, as I never experienced before. This continued nine months, during which every means was tried that could be devised. At length, partly by a very abstemious diet, partly by taking quicksilver, with the application of boiled hemlock outwardly, through the blessing of God, a perfect cure was effected. But before this we removed to Cork, leaving our infant above a hundred miles from us. Though the nurse was a Papist, I have reason to believe that she did her duty to the child.

I found Cork was not as I had left it about four years ago. Then everything appeared lively: now, all was dull and languid; the prayer-meetings were dropped; discipline was not kept up; and the society was much decayed. I laboured with my might to revive the former flame; but hard it is to regain the ground which is lost.

A little before I left Cork, I was at Bandon one Sunday. It happened there was to be a review, on the Monday, of a regiment of light-horse. While I was preaching in the street, Colonel Walpole and all the officers came, and behaved in a most indecent manner. On my speaking to them, the colonel ordered four trumpeters from the barracks into the middle of the congregation, and commanded them to sound. I gave out the stanza beginning,—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;”

and when it was sung, began again: so that the poor trumpeters sounded till they were black in the

face, and at last were fairly worn out. This so enraged the colonel, that he even foamed with indignation and blasphemies, and I expected every moment his cane would have been laid upon the poor men's heads. However, at last, they all retreated, and got little but shame for their trouble. As the colonel was in liquor, I took the liberty to send him a few lines the next morning, and was told he said, he would not be guilty of such an indiscretion again for twenty pounds. But as I was preaching in the market-house the next night, the officers came again. They stood a while pretty attentive, and then broke out into horrid blasphemies, and were for forcing their way through the people to pull me down. But a large number, chiefly old women, violently engaged them, and gained a complete victory; so that I was left in peaceable possession of the field, and finished my discourse quietly. The history of this engagement was published in the Freeman's Journal, and sent all over the kingdom.

In July, 1770, I left Cork, and set out for England, taking Dublin in the way. Here I stayed a few weeks, and opened the new chapel in the Gravelwalk; and received our child from the country, where she had been at nurse during our absence at Cork.* We embarked there in a small cutter for Liverpool, taking our little child with us. After we had got out to sea, there fell a dead calm, so that we could not move forward at all. Our provisions fell short. As for my wife, she, being sick, could eat nothing; and as for myself, I was not anxious. But

* She lived to be married to a kind husband, and bore seven children; and on the 27th of June, 1801, finished her course in peace, and entered her rest, where I hope to meet her, never to part again.

I felt for the poor child, only seventeen months old. We had only a little very bad bread, and some stinking water ; but the patient little creature would take a morsel of the bread, and drink a little of that water, and so lie down again quite content. The vessel was full of the most abandoned clowns, chiefly new recruits ; so that their oaths and vulgar obscenity made it a kind of floating hell.

We spent the Sabbath at Liverpool, where I preached to a large congregation out of doors. From thence we went to Chester, where we spent two or three comfortable days ; and so on to Manchester, the place of my destination for the year. I was glad that I was in England again, where I expected to find genuine religion. I found my diligent and indefatigable predecessor, Mr. Mather, had done all that a laborious man could do to put the Circuit into order, excepting that he had left a family in the preacher's house, which neither suited them nor us. Indeed the house wanted furnishing ; but everything needful was easily granted. I have much reason to acknowledge the kindness of the people there ; for I was more expensive to them than I have been to any Circuit before or since. Yet everything was done without grudging. Here my dear partner had a long and dangerous fever ; but no assistance was wanting, and all expenses cheerfully paid. They did the same when she lay-in ; so that I had no weight or care on that head. Here I spent two comfortable years, and had the satisfaction of seeing some fruit of my labour ; especially during the latter year.

While I was in the Manchester Circuit, I published the discourse upon thoughts, words, and actions, entitled, "A Cry to the Professor's Conscience," &c.

I have the comfort to find that this plain tract has been useful; touching the very causes of backsliding from the living God. It pretends to nothing high or elegant, but purely that which is experimental and practical, and, as such, has answered the end which I proposed. To God our Saviour be the praise!

My two years being expired, I left this agreeable Circuit with much regret. I came into the Birstal Circuit, expecting I was going into the land of Goshen. But, O, the amazing difference! There was a general dulness; no discipline, and not one class met well. I scarcely ever came into so dreary a region. The singing of the people indicated the condition they were in; for the few that did sing, sung as if they were half asleep. The congregations were so shrunk at Birstal, that the preaching on a Thursday evening was in the kitchen; and they had plenty of room.

The house was in great want of necessaries; for there was not one decent thing in it. It was highly necessary, if possible, to awaken the people. I began at Birstal, and so proceeded; but I soon found myself in hot water. When I wanted things a little more decent in the dwelling-house, the Circuit echoed from side to side with my pride and lordliness; and many ill-natured things were said, which made my way very troublesome. One cause of this was, that I thought it my duty to keep close to my study, except when preaching, visiting the sick, &c., or other necessary business called me out. This was construed into pride and stateliness. I think, for the first half year, I never had such a time in my life. However, being sensible I was doing my duty, I determined to continue the same conduct. Rather

than alter my plan, I would choose to leave the Circuit.

Towards the latter end of the year, great numbers began to have a more favourable opinion of my conduct: they believed that I acted from principle; and God owned my poor labours. However, prejudice continued in many to the last; and when the Conference drew on, I found a letter was privately sent against me, in which my pride and niceness were not forgotten, and several surmises added, as if I was a Calvinist, and an enemy to the Church. They had their desire; and I had the happiness of being removed to Bradford.

My last year's treatment had left a soreness upon my mind; but it was soon healed by a kind people. I did not find much life amongst them at first; but whatever I said was well received; my fellow-labourers also joined hand in hand, so that the work of God was greatly revived. This year I was visited with a fever, but found God very present and precious; so that this also was for my good. The second year we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit; believers daily were multiplying, so that during these two years, above six hundred souls were added to the societies, and many, nay, most of them, continue to this day. This was printed in 1780: since then many of them are gone to glory. Great numbers were likewise renewed in love, and enabled to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks."

My next remove was to Keighley. This Circuit was a mere scarecrow on various accounts; so that I entered into it with little less than horror. There was a family in the preacher's house, which I was obliged to remove. The house was to furnish, and

put into repair; and I had to beg the money up and down, which is not pleasing work.

The Circuit was a large rambling range. I was to be but three or four days at Keighley in six weeks; and many of the congregations were very small; all of which were completely disagreeable circumstances. However, I entered upon my work in the best manner I could. I soon got the house put into good repair, and well furnished; so that my family were comfortably situated. God likewise revived His work in many places, so that between four and five hundred were added to us during the year; and the greater part were able to give a reason of the hope that was in them. A little before the Conference, having to preach one Sunday evening at Padiham, the house was by far too small for the congregation. It being a fine evening, we chose a convenient place to preach on out of doors. While I was preaching to a large congregation, the minister came at the head of a mob, in his gown and cassock, and dragged me down. As soon as I could, I mounted again, and again was jostled down. I attempted standing up a third time, but to no purpose; so we adjourned to the preaching-house.

Perceiving the Bible so much neglected, I preached from Psalm cxix. 11, at Heptonstall: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." The people would take no denial, but insisted on my printing the sermon; which I have done, entitling it, "The Word of God a hid Treasure." I have reason to hope it has also been useful. That is my great end both in speaking and writing.

In July, 1776, I went to the Conference at London, preaching at several places by the way, espe-

cially Nottingham, where there is a loving, sensible, judicious people; and at their request I preached in the market-place to a large attentive audience, all as peaceable as if they had been in the most solemn temple. Surely God has something to do in this town. From London I rode to Bristol, preaching in several places, with some degree of satisfaction, especially at Bath and Bristol; so in like manner in going from Bristol I preached at several places, as Gloucester, Worcester, Birmingham, Derby, and Sheffield, meeting with loving people, and liberty in speaking to them. To God our Saviour be all the glory!

Returning to Keighley, I divided the Circuit into two very compact rounds, making Colne and the societies which surrounded it into a Circuit by itself; by which means both the Circuits are become very agreeable. But an unhappy affair happening at Colne put a great damp on the work there.

We had with much difficulty raised a fine large chapel; and being completed, Mr. Wesley came to open it. Being much crowded, both above and below, and the timber of the galleries not being sufficiently strong, just when Mr. Wesley and I had got into the pulpit, before he began, all of a sudden one of the galleries sunk down, and abundance of people had legs, arms, or thighs broken. The confusion, as may easily be imagined, was very great; and the cries of such as were maimed, and such as were frightened, were truly piercing. Many false reports were spread concerning this awful adventure. Some said the whole chapel was in danger, and therefore durst not come into it. By one means or other, the work got a dreadful stun, which I fear it will not recover very soon.

After spending my second year at Keighley, among a simple and loving people, in 1777 I set out for the Conference at Bristol, taking Manchester in my way; and there I preached in an open place near the Infirmary, to a large and well-behaved congregation. From thence I preached at Macclesfield, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Gloucester, &c.; I hope not in vain: and after the Conference I removed to Wednesbury in Staffordshire, where I had the less hopes of doing good, because my predecessor had done all that I could do in any respect. I found the house bare of furniture, the Circuit poor, and trade bad; so that it was hard to put things in order. However, I set about it, and got my design completed in that respect. But still, the great business gave me much uneasiness; the societies were dull, and the congregations miserably small. Calvinism, Antinomianism, and downright Ranterism, had so laid waste this country, that there were small hopes of doing much good. My very soul sunk within me, so that at times it seemed as if I must faint. I cannot tell how they get their time over, who can drag on and see no fruit. Were that my case, I should be ready to conclude, that I was out of my place. To me this was a bitter and a trying season, going round and round, and seeing no good effect. However, when the new year came in, God revived His work. The preaching abroad, in the latter end of the summer, had excited many to come and hear. By hearing they were convinced, and many were brought to the knowledge of the love of God. I think near two hundred were this year added to the societies.

Birmingham, which is a principal place in this Circuit, had for many years been very turbulent, by

reason of the mobbing rabble ; but at length an honest justice let them know their place, so that we have peace now. I preached one Lord's-day evening in a large square, called the New Market. I had much enlargement, and the multitude was still as night. I spoke from Luke xvi. 8 : " The children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." I have reason to hope this discourse has not been printed in vain ; for it has been much read in various places. I have reason to think that our preaching out of doors in Birmingham was a happy means of increasing the blessed work : for before that time we were cased up in an old shabby building, in an obscure, dirty back street ; but soon after our going out of doors, a large new chapel was built ; and since that two more.

After the next Conference, in 1778, I was appointed for the Birstal Circuit, into which I came with fear and trembling, remembering the days of old. As my worthy predecessor, Mr. Pawson, had been much blessed among the people, and was much esteemed by them, it made my entrance the more difficult. He had much improved the dwelling-house, and had regulated several things, so that all who come after him will reap the fruit of his labour. I endeavoured to complete what he had left undone. There had been a blessed work in Birstal, where many were suddenly brought in ; but the fire had not spread much farther. And as these were young converts, and not established, I feared we should have a sad falling away. But this was not the case : some few dropped off, and but a few. On the other hand, the awakening spread into most of the societies ; so that I scarcely ever saw so extensive a work. We joined above seven hundred this year, and the

greater part alive to God. I never knew so simple means made use of, in the hand of a gracious God, to bring sinners to Himself. Prayer-meetings were singularly useful, and so was the preaching; but thunder and lightning, dreams and visions, singing and praying, were all made use of for the awakening of sinners. I returned again into that Circuit, and what Providence has yet to do in me or by me, I cannot tell. But here I am, a monument of amazing mercy, willing to lie in His blessed hands as clay in the hands of the great Potter, so that I may in all things be a vessel meet for my Lord's service; wishing only to finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received from Him.

This year being attended with much unction of the Spirit in the Circuit, by bringing many poor wanderers to the fold of the true Shepherd, I had some sharp trials to grapple with, in some private affairs: among other things, I had a fine boy seized with fits in a violent manner; for one whole day he had them almost without intermission; for no sooner did he recover from one, than another seized him. I was several times fetched home, as it was supposed that he was dying. One time, being fetched home near twenty miles off, on the same mournful occasion, and riding sharply upon a high causeway, and a hollow road on my left hand, my horse took fright at something, rearing upon his hind feet, turned round, and fell down into the hollow way upon me. The man who was with me attempting to dismount his horse too hastily, his foot hung fast in the stirrup, and he could not come to my assistance; only his horse was quiet and stood still, or his case might have been very bad. In the mean time my horse lay upon me as if he were dead: and it was well he

did so ; for had he attempted to rise or struggle with his fore feet, he would have struck me even in the face, and might have killed me on the spot. I thought one of my legs was broken in pieces, as it lay under the horse upon a stone. However, with hard struggling I got myself from under ; and after the numbness was gone, I found I could stand, though much crushed. One circumstance upon another began to impress my mind with uneasy sensations ; but, riding in a lonely place, I saw a strip of clean paper lying on the ground : curiosity led me to alight and see what it was. The words written were verbatim thus : “The love of Christ is a correcting love ; whom He loveth He chasteneth, and correcteth every son whom He receiveth.” This was really a word in season, a sweet reviving cordial ; and I know not that my mind has ever been so harassed since. By what hand the bit of paper was dropped, I cannot tell ; but the hand of a kind Providence directed it to me.

Before I close this part of the narration, there are two things which in gratitude to my God I cannot omit.

I mentioned before, how desirous I was of improving myself in the original languages. After I had made some progress in Greek, having gone through the Greek Testament, and two or three of the classic authors in that language, I wanted to get an acquaintance with the Hebrew. I procured several books ; but they did not answer my purpose. While I was in Edinburgh, I employed a Jew, a professed teacher of Hebrew, at an extravagant rate : but I soon found he was utterly insufficient for what he undertook, as he knew nothing of the grammar ; so that his teaching was a mere imposition. I began

to despair of attaining it, when Robinson's Key came in my way, by which I readily went through the Psalms. I procured his *Manipulus Linguae Sanctæ*; and by the assistance of that, with Buxtorf's Lexicon, I can read my Hebrew Bible with pleasure. I have a particular method of spending my time, which I have found of the utmost importance.

My method of spending my time is this. The time before breakfast is wholly devoted to my Hebrew Bible, comparing the original text with the Latin and English translations. I did, for some time, carry about with me the Septuagint translation, that is, the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek by seventy Jews; but finding it to be so wide of the Hebrew, I have laid it aside, only consulting it occasionally.

After breakfast I write, or read in some Latin author, till it is time to take horse. If I do not ride, I visit the sick, and others, till dinner. After dinner I generally read divinity, history, geography, or philosophy, till five; and then spend some time in my Greek Testament, and considering the subject I shall preach from that evening. After preaching, and the society-meeting, I spend the little remains of the evening in friendly conversation with such as happen to be present, till I retire. I then note down what has occurred in the day, and commit myself into the hands of my gracious God. This is my general manner of spending my time; but I find a good deal of difficulty in keeping to it. Sometimes I want convenient retirement; so that I am obliged to pursue my study in the midst of children, noise, and confusion.*

* The sole reason for inserting this, is a wish to stir up some of my brethren to redeem their time; and what may seem a reflec-

There is a gross error which some of our people labour under; namely, that we are not to premeditate on what we are to preach; that God is to assist us in an extraordinary manner; and that all study and meditation are taking the matter out of His hands. Such a practice serves to patronize a sluggish, lounging temper; and is evidently productive of confusion, rhapsody, and nonsense. Indeed, if anyone comes to me for advice, or in distress of mind, I directly lay aside everything else, and apply myself wholly to the case; but otherwise I keep to my regular plan. I wonder that every preacher does not keep something of a daily journal; more especially of what passes in his own mind. This I have found so useful, that I repent I did not adopt it sooner.

The other circumstance which I cannot omit is, my commencing, what is called, an Arminian. I observed above, that my first religious acquaintance were Calvinists, some of whom had been joined among the Methodists; from these I received such accounts as gave me a prejudice against them. I likewise read little else than Calvinian authors, and was much delighted with what is called "moderate Calvinism." Indeed there is one branch of Calvinism, I mean "reprobation," what Mr. Fletcher calls its "left leg," which I never could cordially embrace. But still I hung in suspense till I read Mr. Wesley's "Predestination calmly considered." Then I bade a final adieu to the damning of infants, and the consigning of unborn souls to hell. His "Appeals" likewise (which I heartily wish every person, not entirely drunk with prejudice, to read over and over) tion in the preceding narrative, is but applicable to very few. My brethren in the Gospel I esteem above all men,

were of great service to me. I was now a kind of Baxterian, or rather Miltonian; for I saw first the scheme in "Paradise Lost." And I still confess much may be said for that scheme of thinking, as it solves many difficulties, and tends to moderation; but still I held fast by Calvinian imputed righteousness, and Calvinian final perseverance. I call them "Calvinian," to distinguish them from scriptural imputed righteousness, and scriptural perseverance. In this mongrel state I was, when Mr. Wesley published his "Abridgment of John Goodwin on Imputed Righteousness." I had never so much as heard of his name; and no wonder, for he was a condemned heretic among the Calvinists. This book I read; but I did not like it, as he was so unmerciful to my favourite scheme, so warmly set forth in my favourite author, Mr. Hervey. However, after some time I determined to give him a fair reading; and that I might be thoroughly satisfied, I read him over twice. I saw the truth as clear as the shining sun. I saw Calvinian imputed righteousness is downright Antinomianism. I still hung in suspense about final perseverance, and knew not which side of the question to take. The authors which I had been accustomed to read were all warm advocates for it, and brought such texts, with their comments upon them, as seemed unanswerable. But Goodwin's "Redemption Redeemed" fell into my hands; towards the latter end of which he considers the Scriptures alleged, and the arguments brought, for final perseverance, and answers them in so masterly a manner, as has not left the shadow of a doubt upon my mind. So that I am firmly persuaded a man may make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

But though my own principles are fixed, I wish

heartily that we could agree to grant each other liberty of conscience. There is no forcing of the understanding; the attempting of it has frequently lighted up the dreadful flames of persecution. I must confess, the ungenteel, unchristian, scurrilous treatment which Mr. Wesley has received from several of the opposite party, has given me a very unfavourable impression both of them and the cause in which they are embarked. It is most certain, that the giving of hard names, with a deal of low buffoonery, will never advance the cause of the meek and lowly Jesus.

My next remove was to the York Circuit, in which I met with many kind friends. They had just finished a neat, genteel house for the preacher's residence, and made everything very convenient. A small spot of ground before the front, I turned into a neat little garden. I found the people very loving, and the congregations increased; and I and my fellow-labourers were received with very great affection. I preached abroad in several parts of the city, especially in the Thursday-market, being very willing to stir up the inhabitants to seek salvation.

Preaching, one Lord's day, in the Thursday-market, the Lord Mayor sent his officers to forbid me, and to insist upon my coming down. I let the speaker deliver his message, and then resumed my discourse, taking no notice of what was said to me, as indeed it meant nothing saying anything to the officers, seeing they only did as they were commanded. I happened to be speaking from a text that was somewhat singular: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." (Acts xvii. 6.) Our brethren thought it highly advisable to publish the sermon, as we expected to hear

further from the magistrates. Accordingly, I wrote it down while everything was fresh upon my mind ; and I have reason to hope it was useful in York, as numbers read it who perhaps never heard one of us preach in their lives ; nor did I hear any more from the Lord Mayor.

The most disagreeable thing in this Circuit is, the smallness of the congregations : hence one is almost buried alive. There is but little trade in any part of the Circuit ; and where there is little trade, there is seldom much increase in religion. The people are chiefly farmers, and in general in a state of great bondage to their wealthy landlords, to whom they are a kind of vassals, and in general dread them more abundantly than they do their Maker : and though some of them have got money upon their farms, with a deal of care and hard labour, yet there are others who are very hard set to live ; and certainly they are some of the greatest slaves in England, for they labour hard, and live very poorly. In short, they seem to have little comfort here, nor any bright prospect of faring much better hereafter. However, there are a few who labour to keep their garments undefiled, and who are very loving to such as are sent to preach the Gospel among them. I felt much union of spirit with them, and hope to meet them in the region of eternal bliss.

My two years being expired in this quiet Circuit, I set out for the Conference at London, and took the road through Lincolnshire, and was truly pained to see how religion lay in ruins all the way to London. I preached in several places ; but the congregations were pitifully small, and very languid and dull. From Huntingdon I crossed the country to Bedford, and preached there, and the next day at

Luton; where I found my worthy friend Mr. Cole had built a small chapel, and it was well filled. During the Conference week I preached in most of our chapels in London, and found much liberty, especially at West-street, Seven-dials; and was glad to find the people in London love plain, simple preaching. I think the preachers, by labouring more for accuracy than life, miss the mark in London; and perhaps that may account for the deadness which hath been complained of in that city for many years. I find the people of London want and love something which will affect their hearts, and stir up their souls.

In my return I took Luton, Bedford, and Leicester in my way, and had a comfortable time at Nottingham. The people seemed to drink in the word as the parched ground drinks in the vernal showers. O, it is a pleasing task to preach to a judicious lively people! Such the people at Nottingham seem to be. I do not wonder that their chapel is too small, and that they are engaged in building one larger, and in a more convenient part of the town, which I hope will prove a blessing to many that are yet unborn.

My destination this year was Sheffield, a place which will be dear to me while I can remember anything. In general I found things at a low ebb, and did not wonder much at that. However, I and my fellow-labourers set about our work with great unanimity of spirit; and our different gifts seemed happily blended, and suited to the people. The large chapel was well filled; and though several detached parties set up, yet it seemed to affect us very little. It is true, there were several unpromising places in the Circuit; and some towns, especially

Doncaster, a pretty, genteel town, but very destitute of religion. Since that time there is a blessed change in Doncaster for the better; insomuch that it is become the head of a Circuit. Indeed, the chapel is in a very disagreeable part of the town, and the little society chiefly very poor. In winter evenings they are pestered with the rabble, and in summer time few will come near. I tried to preach out of doors, but I fear it was to little purpose. However, Sheffield made an ample amends; and as we were a whole week in the town at a time, we had time upon our hands. We were three preachers, and managed with two horses; a scheme which is highly advantageous wherever it takes place. Add to this, there is a cordial love to their ministers: they really "know them that labour among them." They are loving and friendly, and whatever is wanted they are ever ready to supply, and take a delight in making their preachers happy. They do not look upon the cause in which they are embarked, as something by the by, which they are at liberty to let sink or swim; but they look upon it as the cause of God, the business for which Christ Jesus laid down His life; and as such they consider it as their duty, yea, their privilege and honour, to support and propagate it with all their might.

There is also a number of serious, sensible leaders, who interest themselves in carrying on the work of God; and though there are nearly thirty of them, yet for the two years which I had the happiness of being among them, we always met and parted in much peace.

Our Quarterly Meetings were conducted with great harmony and concord: everyone took such care that we never ran short of money, so that there were no

complaints, nor was there cause. As they felt and cared for their ministers, so they considered everything in the way of housekeeping was become dear, and with great cheerfulness augmented the assistance to support the preachers and their families. For my own part, I have much reason to acknowledge the many favours, both public and private, which I and my family received from that affectionate and liberal-hearted people. May the Lord abundantly reward them! Indeed, I believe He does: many He blesses in their basket and in their store in an ample manner.

In Rotherham, in like manner, there are a few particularly dear to me, whose friendship and happy fellowship gratitude will ever oblige me to acknowledge in the most affectionate manner.

I have reason to bless God that I ever came into this Circuit: His presence I have often experienced; and, glory be to His adorable name! I did not labour in vain; good was done; sinners were convinced and converted; believers were strengthened and edified, and backsliders healed. Finding the glorious Godhead of Christ struck at by a number of men united, who called themselves "the Unitarian Club," I preached and printed a sermon to prove that He who died for us is, in the most unlimited sense, "over all, God blessed for ever."

Application would have readily been made for my continuance another year; but as I knew it would be in vain, I desired them not to do it. And here, friendly reader, with the conclusion of my labours among this friendly and much-esteemed people, I will conclude this part of my narrative. May they, may you and I, happily meet in the kingdom of our Immanuel! Amen.

PART II.

MANY years are now elapsed since I published a narrative of the most remarkable occurrences which had befallen me for the space of forty years; nor had I any intention of troubling the world any farther with my history, which may appear to have very little of an interesting nature in it, except to myself. But the part already published having been out of print for some years, and several wishing for another impression, I have determined to reprint it; and several changes having taken place in the body of people with which I am connected, and some in which I am a little implicated, I think it may be of use to add what I call "a second part," in which I may throw a little light upon some recent occurrences. Perhaps some may think, that my attaching other things to my own narrative may be a deviation from the rules of strict biography. But I have observed, in the reading of the lives of others, and in particular that of Mr. Baxter, that a variety of other circumstances are interwoven therein. I may venture to follow so good an example. The death of Mr. Wesley, the agitations which we have had respecting the Lord's Supper, service in what are called church-hours, and the attempts which have been made to rend and divide us, have happened in

the space of a few years, and have troubled the body in no small degree.

I removed from Sheffield to Halifax, in the year 1784; and having had much comfort in that Circuit in years past, I removed with some degree of satisfaction. But there had been a falling away; some had even grown cold and indifferent; and some, I doubt, were quite fallen asleep. I found cause of mourning, that many had departed from the faith, and the greater part had left their first love. Indeed, it is no new thing. Whoever will read the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and the Hebrews, will find the same complaints; and looking into the epistles to the seven Asiatic churches, we see but two, that of Smyrna, and that of Philadelphia, which were free from blame, even in the apostolic age; and what a dreadful falling away soon after ensued, all that have any acquaintance with church-history cannot be ignorant of: all of which shows the propriety of that solemn admonition, "What I say to one, I say to all, Watch."

We were three preachers in the Circuit; but one, Mr. Valton, out of three, was laid up almost the whole year. I think he did not go through the Circuit once. He was a gracious man, and an exceedingly useful preacher; so that want of his labour was a great check to our success. However, some souls were gathered in, and the work a little revived.

My next remove was to Leeds; which proved a trial to my patience, especially the first year. I always find where the reins of discipline are slackened, it sinks the state of vital religion very much. I found it so here: and the mischief is, there is in people an unwillingness to be brought into order, when they

have been accustomed to live without it; and the minister who attempts the reform must bear his cross. There were several local preachers who ought not to have been private members, whose conduct was even immoral. I am at a loss to know what can induce men to preach, who are destitute of the life and power of godliness. However, there were several very excellent characters among the local preachers; several of whom are gone to their everlasting reward. But very great care should be taken that men of unblemished characters alone be employed in the ministry of the word. The same care should be taken respecting the class-leaders; and then there is some hope that they will labour to make the people like themselves. Indeed, it is natural for the people to take the tinge of their guides. There were many excellent persons in the society at Leeds. I was well aware that many of our people seldom went to church, and received the Lord's Supper nowhere. Truly they had lost sight of it; there might have been no such command in the New Testament as, "Do this in remembrance of Me." Knowing this, I exhorted the people to attend the Lord's Supper, and happened to say, the time would come when the Methodists would enjoy that ordinance among themselves, and in the mean time I wished them to receive it in the best manner they could. The very intimation of any such thing was as bad as high treason, and I soon found myself in hot water. However, in the midst of trouble some good was done; and the second year was more peaceable, and consequently more comfortable.

In the month of November I was seized with a rheumatic fever, the severest affliction of body I ever remember labouring under. The pain was such that

I could compare it to nothing, but as if my limbs were tearing or twisting off. It brought me very low, and was the only time that I can remember when anyone had to sit up in the night with me ; and this laborious task my dear partner chiefly undertook. In the beginning I felt much comfort and confidence in God ; but towards the latter end my head was considerably affected, and the slumbers I had were disturbed with wild and incoherent roavings ; and very weak indeed I was. However, the Lord raised me up again ; but the effects of that disorder, I suppose, I shall feel till the dust shall return to the dust again. It renders walking particularly fatiguing ; for after I have walked a few hundred yards, the pains in my knees, ankles, &c., are so acute, that I am soon in a bath of sweat, and am obliged to sit down upon anything that I can find in my way. I have considerable difficulty in getting on horseback ; so that I am not well qualified for travelling, either on horseback or on foot. I was obliged this year to submit to spectacles. I had perceived my sight gradually to fail for some time. This I attributed to the close attention which I had paid some years before to the compiling "the Concordance" which I published ; and being rather straitened for time, I did much of the work by candle-light, without using a screen,—a circumstance which I advise everyone to attend to, who either reads or writes much by candle-light. I once thought my sight would last to the end of my days ; but by making too free with it I am mistaken.

My next remove was to Manchester. I had laboured many years ago in this Circuit with much satisfaction, and left it with regret. As there will be a thorn in every rose, so I found it here. A few who

affected to be righteous overmuch, that is, who set up themselves as judges of other people, gave us some trouble ; so that I was under the disagreeable necessity of putting two of those troublesome men out of the society. However, we had a considerable ingathering of precious souls, especially in Saddleworth ; so that it was a pleasure to me to go into these rough valleys. But in every stage of life we have need to watch : so I found it in this Circuit ; and not being always on my guard, I sometimes gave way to trifling circumstances, which brought my mind low. Satan will make a corrupt heart subservient to his devices, without due care. No matter how trivial a thing may be, if it stand between God and the soul, it does much mischief. May I ever learn wisdom from slips and blunders ; for I have many of these to bemoan. It is well there is a never-failing Intercessor, an Advocate with the Father, who can pity poor mortal worms, whose grace is sufficient to heal backsliding souls, and to help in time of need. I may say, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord ; for in Thy sight I can neither justify myself, nor another."

My next remove was to Hull ; hoping that bathing in salt water might be of some use to my poor disordered son. Whether it was owing to the low damp country, and scarcity of fire, or some other cause, I knew not ; but my rheumatic complaints were troublesome, so that I could but walk very poorly. Indeed, in some places, the roads were so bad, that it was impossible to go any quicker than a slow footpace, and then I was much pinched with the cold. In Hull, the congregations were large, and pretty well in Beverley ; but in other places they were small and dull enough.

In the beginning of my second year, soon after the Conference, I had two providential escapes; and I should be very ungrateful to my gracious Preserver, were I to forget them. In my return from the Bristol Conference, I took Sheffield in my way, and so through Rotherham and Doncaster, to Thorne; and there, hoping to save time and expense, I took a small boat, expecting to get down to Hull in one tide. But the boatman trifled away so much time in the morning, that the tide was spent when we got to Brough, twelve miles short of Hull. My youngest daughter was with me; and in this place, when the tide is out, it leaves a very large space covered with mud and slime, so that it is very difficult to get on shore, especially for women; and as we had to wait here more than six hours, I was sure it would be improper for my daughter to remain on the water all that time. I having my boots on, with the help of a staff, got on shore; but, it being so slippery, I durst not take my daughter on my back, lest I should fall, and throw her in the mud; the boatman being old, and rather feeble, I durst not trust her with him, for the same reason. However, I saw a stout man, who had been catching eels, without shoes or stockings, and one that was accustomed to walk on those slippery places, and got him for sixpence to fetch my daughter, and he brought her safe on shore: thus far we were safe, and I was thankful. But still we were a little at a loss how to dispose of ourselves, for six or seven hours, till the tide should turn. There was but one poor little alehouse in the place; and that was crowded with men drinking, and far from being agreeable. However, we passed the time as well as we could, till eight in the evening, when we weighed anchor and embarked again. Heavy rain

came on, and it was very dark; but we had no shelter, being in a little open boat. The wind meeting the tide, made our little bark toss to some purpose. A young woman in the boat screamed out amain: my dear girl said not a word, though she apprehended we should be overset; but commended herself into the hands of our gracious God. Perhaps there was not much danger, but we thought there was, and at any rate our situation was very unpleasant; the waves tossed, the night was dark, and the rain was heavy. About midnight we arrived in the port of Hull; and here, having to climb over the ships in the dark, I was very near falling into the hold of a large empty ship. I felt a touch of impatience at the man for bringing us into such a disagreeable situation. However, after some delays, we got safe to our habitation. Thus will the storms of life end; and may we reach the haven of eternal repose!

“’Tis there I’ll bathe my weary soul
In seas of endless rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

The next kind interposition of Providence was as follows:—A part of the Circuit lies in Holderness; a large tract of low, marshy country; and, in order to drain it, there are large canals cut in different directions. They are so large that boats go on them, by which they carry the people’s manure from place to place; and over these canals are bridges built of brick, in convenient places, for horses and carriages to pass over. Coming to one of these bridges, which was newly built, a man standing by the side of the canal said, “Sir, I am doubtful if that bridge is not giving way. I think it is hardly safe for you to

attempt passing over." As I saw no danger, I feared none; and, thinking I should have a long way to go round to another bridge, and perceiving carriages had gone over, I went on; but before I got over, the whole fabric came down as if it had been cut off at each end. It sunk under the horse: he dropped down perpendicularly; and I very gravely sat on his back. It had been dry weather for a long time, so that the water in the canal was low; which was very providential, or very likely both the horse and myself would have been lost. Another circumstance was very favourable; that is, a considerable number of men were at work in the field; and, hearing the crash of the bridge, they ran, and gave all assistance to help the horse out, or the water might have risen by the current being stopped, so that the poor animal might have been drowned before I could have got assistance, as the place was at a considerable distance from any houses. There was another circumstance which I considered as providential; and that was, had the horse taken a step or two more before the fall of the bridge, his fore-feet would have been on firm ground, and, the bridge giving way behind, he would very likely have tumbled backward, and fallen upon me; and if so, it is very easy to judge what would have been my situation. But my gracious God gives His angels charge over His followers; for they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. In these circumstances, I am persuaded of their kind interposition. It is true, God does not need their interference; nor does He need men to preach, seeing He can convert souls without them; nor does He need men to till the ground, seeing He can cause the earth to yield her

fruit without the tiller's toil; but He is pleased to use His creatures as instruments, that thereby they may be stimulated to diligence, and excited to love one another, seeing that all are made subservient to the good of the whole: insomuch that the different members of society are all useful, even as the different members of the body are to the whole. In the most opulent city, the humble chimney-sweeper is as useful in his place as the chief magistrate.

In March 2d, 1791, that great man of God, the Rev. John Wesley, paid the debt of nature. He ended his long, laborious, and useful life comfortably. That I had a crowded audience, far more than the large chapel in Hull could contain, was not to be wondered at; as I suppose that was the case in every place where a funeral sermon was preached on the occasion, which I apprehend was all over the three kingdoms. It was thought great changes would take place after his death, and various things were prophesied by people of warm imaginations. We had some little stir; I believe chiefly through a printed circular which was issued from Hull. I suppose it originated from some persons who professed to be warm advocates for the Church, and persuaded others to sign it. This document was sent to every Circuit in the kingdom, and called an echo back from many Circuits; so that it was thought there would be a division at the Conference; and perhaps steps by some were prepared for such an event. A scheme had been previously taken to divide the kingdom into Districts; and accordingly the preachers in the several Districts met, and did what they could to prepare matters for the Conference, which assembled at Manchester. We had a large assembly, as might be expected; and many things

were said *pro* and *con*, and in much better humour than might have been hoped. In the issue, it was determined by the majority to take up the plan just as Mr. Wesley had left it. This I saw would be a bone of contention the ensuing year, as it left our affairs in a very unsettled state. Vast numbers of people, besides preachers, attended at this Conference, that is, came to Manchester, all anxious to hear what the result would be. I was certain that such a decision would leave us worse than it found us; and so it proved. Indeed, we had a troublesome year. Printed letters were issued out on all sides, and all companies were taken up with debates upon old and new plans, to the injury of brotherly love.

My appointment was for Liverpool, where there were two warm parties. Not knowing what sort of provision there was for a family, or what kind of reception I should meet with, I judged it prudent to go alone, and leave my family at Manchester, where my eldest [daughter] was married, and had been settled some time.

When I came to Liverpool, things had but a discouraging aspect. I found the dwelling-house shut up, and had been so for some time; everything looked very cold and naked, all just as it had been left; no steward nor any other person came near me. It was Saturday when I arrived. I preached that evening. On the Lord's day a friend invited me to dine; and I preached morning and evening with some degree of liberty.

On the Monday morning the steward called upon me, and appeared in a friendly mood. He told me, that if I would let things go on in the old plan, everything I wished for, I should have; but if I

made any alteration, I must shift for myself; or to that effect.

After some days I received an address from ten leaders, vehemently requesting that there might be no service in church-hours, nor sacrament. About the same time I received another address from thirteen leaders, (and, as I remember, three names besides, who stood neuter,) who begged, in the name of their people, that I would let them have service in church-hours: they did not want to compel the rest of their brethren, but only pleaded for themselves, that they might have liberty of conscience, and an opportunity of bringing their families to the public worship at a convenient time. What made the matter more in their favour was, a new chapel was built rather on one side of the town; and some said, they subscribed on purpose to the building, that it might be opened at that time of the day. On the present plan, it was of very little use, except on a Sunday evening; for on a Sunday morning very few indeed attended. We were two preachers in town, and had nothing to do, from the preaching at seven in the morning, till six in the evening; and our people were running hither and thither, hearing what was far from profiting them, or else staying at home; and two chapels were shut up during the best part of the day. Had not a large body of people requested it, however reasonable the thing itself might be, I should have let things go on in the same channel, for the sake of such as desired it. In a few days after, came six of the leading men of the Church party, and wished to converse with me on the subject. We had a long conversation. I used every argument that appeared to be scriptural and reasonable; but it made no impression: all they

could say was, that it was the old plan, and God had blessed it; and Mr. Wesley had said, "If the Methodists leave the Church, God would leave them." I had another difficulty in my way. We had a new dwelling-house covered in, but it wanted finishing, and we were paying rent for another house in the mean time. The present steward would take no active part in it, unless I would promise that no alteration should be made; and no one could interfere in the business but the man in office, so that we were at a stand. I knew that things ought not to continue thus; therefore, in a full vestry-meeting, I was determined to have the matter settled, and urged the steward to set the business forward, that we might not be paying rent for a house, and let our own run to ruin. After much reasoning, and even entreating, he utterly refused to act: so I was obliged to appoint other stewards, to see our business carried on.

I was now urged to open the new chapel in the forenoon: and having waited several months, and used every argument, in which I believed both Scripture and reason would support me, to reconcile the contending party, but to no purpose; and perceiving that two-thirds of the society were grieved and hurt; I, on the 16th day of November, 1791, began the service at half-past ten in the forenoon. The ten leaders immediately withdrew, and took as many of their people with them as they could prevail upon. Several persons were set at liberty in that chapel in the forenoon service, and the society rapidly increased from that time. However, it was a time of much trouble to my mind. But if ever I did anything with a single eye in my life, it was my conduct at this time; for I am sure I had

neither ease, honour, nor profit in view. As the body was convulsed, and as those throughout the nation who wanted the service at a convenient hour, and to have the Lord's supper according to our Saviour's institution, were quite willing that their brethren should enjoy their liberty in going to church, &c. ; as every other circumstance belonging to Methodism, both in doctrine and discipline, was to stand as it had done, nothing being altered, changed, or dropped ; it seemed unreasonable, that any part of the Connexion should put a yoke upon the necks of their brethren, which they themselves were unwilling to bear. I published a pamphlet as a vindication of our conduct, and showed some weighty reasons for our proceedings. I hope it was useful.

As our brethren had lived so long without the communion, they wished for that ordinance, knowing it to be the command of Christ ; and they solicited me to administer it to them. I believed that I had a perfect right to do so. Moreover, when I was appointed by the Conference for Liverpool, I understood there were two parties ; I therefore desired the Conference to give me my orders, so that I might know what it was expected that I should do. The answer was, that I might just act as I thought proper, when I came thither, as I should be then capable of judging when I saw how the circumstances stood. Hence I judged that I had full power to act according to the best of my judgment ; and that was my rule.

But there was one difficulty in my way, respecting the Lord's supper : though I had been a preacher thirty years or more, yet I had never received any formal ordination by the imposition of hands ; and

although I believed it lawful, yet I did not think it expedient, to celebrate the Lord's supper without some formality of that kind. I own I had some hesitation in my mind concerning the propriety of submitting to a human form, after being owned so many years by the chief Shepherd without it. I am certain that such a ceremony is not essential to a Gospel ministry; and likewise the solemn admission into the awful office by a number of old, well-tried, and aged ministers of the New Testament, appears to me a real scriptural ordination. However, I submitted to a formal ordination. But there was another obstacle in the way. Our people have been exhorted to go to the Lord's supper; but numbers are very ignorant of the nature and design of the solemn ordinance. I therefore considered what I could recommend to them upon the subject. I could not recollect one single tract that was sufficiently explicit, clear, and concise. I therefore wrote one upon 1 Corinthians xi. 28, delivered it in the chapel, and afterwards published it. I have the confidence to think, I have seen nothing upon the subject that states that important ordinance in a clearer light.

The time of our District-Meeting drew on, where I attended. My conduct at Liverpool was examined and approved; and, farther, it was agreed that I should administer the Lord's supper at Liverpool. Accordingly, I gave public notice that I should join with them in breaking bread in remembrance of Him who died for us. It was a blessed season in the general; and two poor captives were set at liberty, who desired thanks to be given in the evening to their gracious Deliverer.

The affair at Liverpool made so much noise, that some of the preachers in the District would have a

meeting upon the spot. I made no objection, though I deemed the meeting very needless. Six preachers came, three from our District, and three from other Districts. There were several things that I might have objected to, but I really wanted peace, consistent with a good conscience. After a day's talk, it was agreed to drop the Lord's supper till the Conference. This I submitted to. I did it for peace.

The Conference met in London in 1792; and I was of course arraigned at the bar for my conduct at Liverpool. However, I pleaded "not guilty." I could not see that I had committed any crime. I asked, Had I not full power given me from the Conference to act as I judged for the best? Had I not done so? But I had caused a division in the society. I answered, "There would have been a greater division if I had acted otherwise, and a greater cause for it." After various things had been said *pro* and *con*, the matter dropped, only my brethren in the opposition urged my removal from Liverpool the ensuing year. This I would not consent to, for two reasons: 1. My removing would imply that I had acted amiss,—a thing that I was not conscious of; and, secondly, as I had taken much pains, and suffered much, in procuring the people what I conceived to be their just liberty, I was not willing that anyone should be sent who would undo all, and drive two-thirds of the people from us. At length that matter was settled, and I was permitted to return again. Mr. Joseph Bradford was appointed to be my colleague. As he had professed himself to be on the side of the Church, it was thought he was appointed as a check upon me. However, I knew him to be an upright, worthy man, and therefore

made no objection against him ; and as it was determined to have no sacrament that year in our chapels generally, I resolved to keep the order. We passed the year very agreeably, and had not one word of contention either about the sacrament or anything else. Nor do I remember ever passing an easier year in all my life. We began preaching at Ormskirk, got a place to preach in, fitted it up with a pulpit and benches, and a couple of rooms adjoining, one of which we got furnished for the preacher, whenever he came. A man and his wife occupied the other, and looked after the little chapel, and did what the preacher had occasion for while there. We also formed a small society. A considerable sum of money was begged for the above purposes ; but I was heartily sorry that it was given up some time after we left the Circuit. We had contended with much opposition by mobs and riots ; but even these were quelled. A ringleader was taken up, and sent to prison ; but, for the sake of his family, even our people begged him off, so that he was not tried at the sessions, to which he was bound : yet after the way was thus made, and matters in a fair way of being successful, it pained my mind to find that all was abandoned ; and if ever the place is attacked again, very likely the rabble will renew their opposition.

I observed before, that our numbers through the Connexion were less by three hundred than they were the year before : such a reduction I cannot remember we ever had. It was therefore determined at the next Conference that some places should have the Lord's supper ; and Liverpool was one. My appointment was Bolton, to which place I came in very great hopes of peace and quietness. We had a good work at

Bury, especially the first year : that society had been brought very low ; but we had a gracious ingathering. Also at a place called Radcliffe we began a society.

Our Conference was this year at Bristol, and an uncomfortable time it was. We had much debate, and to little purpose. As our matters were not settled, and vast numbers of our brethren were still dissatisfied, a meeting was projected to be held at Lichfield, to see if some mode could be hit upon for the general good, to be offered at the ensuing Conference. Who was the author of the meeting I never knew to this day. Being not only invited to this harmless convention, but strongly urged to go, I attended. We met at an inn, supposing that we could meet without being taken notice of, as Lichfield is a place where no Methodists reside. I feared that the scheme would do more harm than good ; and so it proved. As for our assembling there in secret, that was very improbable, as we were all preachers of long standing, and very much known all over the kingdom. My sole intention was to try any scheme that could be agreed upon to give our brethren, who desired it, all the ordinances of Christ. But when we were together, another thing was started : it was thought in many instances the Districts were not sufficient for the necessary discipline in certain cases, and therefore it was judged that some other mode should be thought on ; which was, that a number of superintendents should be appointed by the Conference, to have the inspection of the whole Connexion. There was not so much as a thought that anything should be done without the concurrence of the Conference. For my own part, I was indifferent about the matter ; and whether such a scheme would be for the better or no, I cannot say : it might have its use,

and certainly would be liable to great abuse. However, the whole of this meeting gave great offence : the secret manner of holding it, and the place where it was held, all contributed to raise suspicions in the minds of the preachers who were not there. So that I may say, in the softest language, that little conventicle, though very harmless, did no good.

In 1795 our Conference was held at Manchester ; and at the same time and place a meeting was held by many trustees and others, who were strenuous for what they termed the " old plan." Several messages passed to and fro, from that meeting and the Conference, to little purpose. At length nine preachers were chosen to draw up a Plan of Pacification, in which all were supposed to agree.

A scene opened this year which threatened the most terrible rent that had ever befallen the Methodists. It was introduced by a succession of productions under fictitious names, as Martin Luther, Paul and Silas, Aquila and Priscilla, &c. They were drawn up with no small degree of art, and calculated to gain the affections of such as received them. There appeared much truth and a pretence of uprightness to run through the whole, so that many were highly prejudiced in favour of the writer. At length he appeared openly, by publishing a pamphlet, entitled " The Progress of Liberty." In this virulent production, many things were published for facts without any proof. Many hints were thrown out calculated to prejudice the minds of the public against the preachers, especially the seniors. This pamphlet was eagerly bought up. Such as wished to find some objections against the preachers thought they now had the desired occasion. The preachers in London wrote to the chairman of the District in

which Mr. Kilham, the author of the above pamphlet, was, to call a meeting, and try to make him sensible of the impropriety of his conduct, in publishing a pamphlet calculated to asperse the whole body of preachers in so scandalous a manner. The meeting was called; but it answered no other end, than that of giving him fresh matter for slander and reproach; and, finding that he had won over a considerable party to espouse his cause, it made him the more confident, insomuch that he appeared bold enough to set all his adversaries at defiance; and, I suppose, he thought, either that the Conference durst not exclude him, or, if they did, that he would become the leader of a large party both of preachers and of people. Thus matters went on till the Conference; and many of the preachers thought very favourably of him till his trial came on; but then, hearing him make so poor and lame a defence, and owning that he had asserted many things without any sort of proof, they saw a little more into the man and his motives, and of course their minds were changed: they viewed him in a proper light. Much lenity was showed him, he owned; but he demurred to the legality of the court. He pleaded for a public hearing; that is, that his trial should be in the public chapel, and that all might come forward to hear and see, and all that chose might be permitted to speak. This by no means could be admitted; for every united body have a right to try their own members: and as for witnesses, there needed none; for the witnesses against him were his own books. If he could vindicate them, he was clear; if not, there could only be two things, one of which must be done: the one was, to own his fault; the other was, for the Conference to pass what censure or judgment they

thought proper. Several days were taken up in labouring to convince him, that he had acted wrong in publishing so many things calculated to prejudice the whole nation against the preachers, and thereby to render their labours ineffectual ; and the greatest part of what he had written was either conjectural, or upon misinformation. But though he was confounded, and had little to say for himself, he appeared confident enough, judging from his abettors that he had little risk to run ; for it seems that he had been encouraged on his way from Alnwick to London. Indeed, some hints were thrown out that the Conference durst not expel him ; his party was so strong, that, let his cause be what it would, he must be kept in, or we must sink. At length the vote for his expulsion passed the Conference, without a single voice to the contrary. In giving our vote in Conference, all that are for the question stand up : it is then reversed, and all who are against it stand up. The vote of his expulsion passed both ways ; and, to render the matter more firm, the sentence was written in a book, and laid on the table ; and all who believed his sentence just were requested to sign it, which was done by the whole body, I believe every individual, except myself ; and the reason why I did not was, because it was my office to deliver the sentence of Conference to him, which if I had not believed to be just, I should not have done. Such was the conduct of the Conference with respect to Alexander Kilham ; and I firmly believe, that all who took the lead in that transaction were led by the strictest uprightness, and acted in the fear of God.

We had really a troublesome year, and much hurt was done, but more especially when a majority of trustees could be found on his side : there they

violently took our chapels from us, and herein showed that they were unfaithful men. It was once thought advisable to commence a suit in the King's Bench, to try the legality of such unjust proceedings; but, considering the tediousness, expenses, and uncertainty of litigations, we judged it best to try to build new chapels where we had a prospect of doing good, and so leave the robbers in possession of their spoil.

The Conference came on at Leeds in 1797; and it was confidently given out that a vast number of preachers would join what was called the "New Connexion." A vast concourse of people assembled at Leeds, and Mr. Kilham and his friends took a vacant Baptist chapel, and formed themselves into a Conference: several of our preachers seemed to waver, and, as we understood, attended their meetings as well as ours; and several we thought would join them; but in the issue three, and only three, travelling preachers actually joined them.* In the latter end of December an accident happened to Mr. Kilham, which took him off. A small bone stuck in his throat; and though it was extracted, yet some vessel broke, so that it proved his end. A life thus closed in the very height of so much disturbance raised in the church of God would naturally lay a foundation for various reflections; and various things were said: however, his friends said he died in much peace. Before I close this unpleasant subject, I would make a remark or two.

We see that however obscure or useless a person may be in the church and state, yet he may be extremely hurtful; and though not an instrument of good, yet an instrument of much harm. We have

* Two of whom have left them.

many instances of this in history. It is certain that, during the twelve years that Mr. Kilham travelled in the Connexion he was of little use, as Mr. Pawson has made appear from the Minutes, tracing every place where he travelled, and the numbers in the societies; and truly, he made so small a figure, that I am inclined to think many preachers did not know him. I never heard him, but I have been told that his gifts as a preacher were rather beneath a mediocrity. But I am not acquainted with any man that ever entered our Connexion that ever did half the mischief. I fear that in Lancashire and Yorkshire many are driven into infidelity and to eternal ruin. A fool may so fire a house or a town, that all the wise men in it cannot extinguish the flames.

Again: I would observe, suppose I am in one of the most regular families in the kingdom, and am determined to act the dark ill-natured spy: I have my doomsday-book, in which I mark every little slip, in word or deed. I put it down with my own meaning, or comment upon it; after I have waited for a convenient season, I bring into judgment this partial chronicle against the person or persons, with all the ill-natured reports that I have been capable of scraping together: might not the most innocent characters be thus made to appear as black as midnight? Now, if that may be the case in a private family, what shall we say concerning so large a body as the Methodists? That this was the case and conduct of Mr. Kilham must appear to every impartial inquirer into his proceedings.

I would further observe, that when persons become advocates for a party, they will act very inconsistently with their natural turn of mind. From

Mr. Kilham's pamphlets many were made to think that Methodism was a very expensive system, and that the people were fleeced and half plundered. He has thrown out many hints, as if the preachers were really making a gain of the people, and more especially the old preachers. There are none who travel in the Connexion that have been longer in it than myself: of course, I am implicated in this condemnation. I now write in the presence of Him who sees the secrets of all hearts, and shall fairly represent my own case; and very likely it may be nearly that of many senior preachers.

I began to preach among the Methodists occasionally in the year 1760. In the beginning of the year 1761 I might be said to begin to travel; that is, I supplied the lack of service of several preachers, when they were sick, or went to see their friends at a distance, and particularly in the Birstal Circuit, which was then of great extent, and also in Leeds; and this I continued to do till August, when I set out for the Conference at London. What I did was gratis, not even having a penny for the turnpikes; except that the steward of Bradford Circuit gave me once half-a-guinea; and when I set out for the Conference, the steward of Leeds Circuit gave me fifteen shillings. I had a little money of my own, and some articles to dispose of: the latter I left in the hands of a person to sell for me, which he did, and, being poor, he disposed of the money, and soon after died; so that business was settled.

I set out for London, and from thence into Wales: here my work was rugged and disagreeable enough. I had no quarterage, no travelling expenses, but now and then a shilling or half-a-crown was put into my hands. Sometimes I was obliged to dine

and lodge at an inn, and to pay both for my horse and myself. In this manner I passed the year, preaching as I could, sometimes under cover, and often in the open air, even throughout the winter, which, some may remember, was very severe. Some time before the Conference, I made an excursion into Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, counties in which none of our preachers had ever set foot. It appeared to me, that in Pembrokeshire there was a probability of doing good, as I preached several times in Pembroke town, and in various other places: accordingly, I was sent from Leeds Conference back to Pembrokeshire, where everything was quite new, nor had I one shilling given me, either for the expense of my journey thither, or for my support when I got thither. But it may be said, "How did you live?" I lived upon my own stock, till Providence raised me friends. I formed a Circuit, including about two hundred and fifty persons by Christmas; and at the end of the year I went to the London Conference; but still at my own expense, except some small matters which a friend here and there might give me, which could not amount to much, as the people were generally poor. From the Conference at London, I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland. Here for the first time I received thirty shillings from Conference, for my expenses on the way. Fifteen shillings I paid for a place on the outside of the coach to Bristol, besides the expenses on the road; twenty-seven shillings I paid the captain for my passage to Dublin, besides provision, mate, sailors, &c. When I got to Dublin, I had about a hundred miles to travel to Castlebar; and even there my allowance was very short. I think when I left Wales, my stock was about thirty pounds. It was

considerably reduced by the time I got to Castlebar. I stayed two years in Ireland; and from Limerick I came to the Manchester Conference. My stock of money was now reduced to about fifteen guineas. It was thought there was a probability of raising a society in Glasgow, and I was appointed to make trial; and out of my fifteen guineas, I gave nine pounds for a horse, saddle, &c. I received from the Conference three guineas to take me to Glasgow,—a place where we had no society, no place to receive me, no place to preach in; strong prejudices to oppose; and a long, cold, dark winter before me. How I passed my time there is already related. My second year in Scotland was agreeable, particularly in Edinburgh: there all my wants were abundantly supplied.

In 1767 I left Scotland, being appointed for Chester. I bought a horse out of my own pocket, nor do I remember that I had anything for travelling expenses. When I came to Chester, my property amounted to six guineas. Judge now, how rich I was become, after near seven years of hard toil and labour. In Chester I married a wife with a little property, the greatest part of which I have lost by a person breaking. From Chester we were appointed for Dublin, and had two guineas to take us thither: there we had all things richly to enjoy. From thence we removed to Cork. Meantime my wife bore a child, which we were under the necessity of putting out to nurse, my wife being so greatly indisposed. All I received that year for my wife, and the nursing of the child, was either four pounds or four guineas. From Cork we were appointed to Manchester; and I think it was either three or four guineas that I had, to take my wife and child thither. I will further

add, for twenty years, what I have received for preaching has not kept my family with food; and I can assure my reader, we do not keep an extravagant table.

Now let any of Mr. Kilham's abettors judge what cause there is for all the reproach and slander which he has raised against the old preachers. Nay, let them judge between him and me, in one instance. He was appointed from Newcastle to Aberdeen, where everything was provided, a house, fire, candles, stipend, for himself and family; a large friendly society, and fifteen guineas to take him thither. I was appointed from Limerick in Ireland, to Glasgow, above six hundred miles,—no society, no lodging, no place to preach in, no friend to advise with, nothing for either board or quarterage; and three guineas were all I had for the whole. Now, I say, let his friends judge between us. He came among us a poor servant; and it is surprising to me, if by one means or another, he has not left some thousands behind him. If it should be objected, I am boasting, I may say that matter of fact has compelled me; and I write thus in the just vindication of myself, and my fellow-labourers who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Mr. Kilham and many others have entered into and enjoy the fruit of our labours, which many of our junior brethren gratefully acknowledge.

Several things concurred to make the years 1796 and 1797 a trying season to me, such as I pray God I may never meet with again. But they are over; yet the remembrance is bitter to me. I have been foolish enough to expect fair gales, till I arrive at the haven of eternal repose; but I have in this been disappointed.

However, in those stormy days, we had some fruit

in Oldham Circuit, especially in Saddleworth. I left that rough valley in a very promising situation in 1789; but there had been a withering time, and we found them very low; but the Lord revived His work amazingly, so that the chapel was far too small on the Lord's day; and in different places where we preached in private houses, on the week-days, we had good congregations, and not without fruit.

My next remove was to Halifax. Here I had laboured in years past with much satisfaction. I might have expected something extraordinary, as we had heard of a wonderful revival, and of scores being converted in an evening: but if so, there had been a dreadful falling away; for certainly they were in a very low condition. The matter was, that during the noisy time, which was called "the revival," all discipline was laid aside; sensible people were shocked and disgusted at seeing such irregular and unscriptural proceedings; little fruit appeared; many poor men ran themselves out of breath in staying late at nights, and neglected their families, and even their labour, and of course got into debt, without taking conscientious care to discharge it. I doubt that is an evil too general. I believe oftentimes God begins a good work, but poor ignorant men will needs take it out of His hands; and by noise and clamour, striving to work upon the passions of people without their judgments being informed, bring it into confusion and contempt; and by this means the enemy gains no small advantage. I have ever been fearful of damping or hurting the work of God, and therefore have borne with things which I did not approve of; thinking there might be more of God in those irregularities than I was aware of. But, to speak in the softest terms; many, very many, of those hasty

converts have proved like the stony-ground hearers, —in the time of temptation they have fallen away. Now, if there is indeed a work of grace upon their hearts, inquiry should be made whence they came, and how that work began, and appoint a time and place where they may be farther instructed, by having their judgments informed in things which are essential; and, if they can read, they should be pointed to suitable passages of Scripture, and directed to meet in class with some proper leader, so that the work may be established, and the Divine seed nourished, and the work confirmed in their souls.

In 1799 I removed to Bristol. I could have wished to find this venerable mother-church in a more lively situation than what it was really in. The wound which was made by the division of a few years before was not healed. I think both I and my colleagues did what we could to bury old grievances; but the deadly effects of the old enmities were not destroyed. My hands hung down, fearing I was labouring in vain, and spending my strength for nought. Week-night congregations were small, the classes did not meet so well as I thought they might; this bowed down my spirit, and often made my hands weak, and my knees were feeble. And yet there are many excellent ones in this city, whose names will be found in the book of life.

In the month of May I made an excursion into Cornwall; in which I confess I was highly gratified, both there and in my way thither, particularly at Plymouth-Dock. On the Lord's day I preached in the forenoon at the Dock, and at two at Plymouth, and administered the Lord's supper to a considerable company of communicants, and returned to the

Dock, and preached at six. Being under the necessity of being at St. Austle the next day, and the coach setting out the next morning at six from Tar-Point, which lies on the other side the water, a friend sent me word that he should be glad if I would take a bed at his house. The evening being fine, about a dozen, chiefly young persons, took a boat, and, being singers, they sung several hymns, which I felt very sweet; and as we passed by several first-rate men-of-war, which lay at anchor, it brought the men upon deck, but I did not hear one scoffing word from any of them. I do not remember ever to have enjoyed a little trip with greater satisfaction in all my life. I likewise met with very kind treatment at the house of my kind host, and slept comfortably for the first night in Cornwall. The next morning at six I set out for St. Austle; and when I came to Liskeard, I found that preaching was published for me there that evening. I was sorry I could not stay; for it is a noted place for Deists, as I am told, and especially for the disciples of Mr. Paine; and, as it was known that I had answered his "Age of Reason," I understood many of that fraternity intended hearing me. I met with very kind treatment at St. Austle, and had their chapel well filled two nights. A kind friend took me in his carriage on the Wednesday to Truro, where we had a crowded audience, and a good congregation the following morning. I feared my time would not allow me to get so far as Penzance, and the Land's End; but the kind friends so ordered matters that my wish was gratified. On Thursday I came to Falmouth, where Mr. Wesley had like to have lost his life; but all is peace now. We had a full chapel, and several preachers were so kind as to give me the meeting.

Friday, May 16th, I came to Helston ; but the night was very stormy and rained much, and, the people living wide, our congregation was not so large as was expected.

Saturday, 17th.—I came to Penzance ; and, as in every place before, was received with much kindness. In the evening I walked to Newlyn, the native place of Mr. Jaco. On Sunday morning I had a sweet season at Penzance, in speaking from Phil. ii. 5. In the evening we were a little at a loss how to proceed : the chapel was too little, and the wind was so high that there was no preaching abroad ; but they removed such benches as were movable, as many got into the house as could, and the remainder stood at the windows. But we were warm enough within. However, I hope the labour was not in vain. May 19th, I was resolved to gratify my curiosity with a sight of the Land's End ; and really a tremendous sight it is : the high rocks, with the deep caverns, caused by the turbulent waves, made everything look awful. Here Mr. Charles Wesley made the verse,—

“Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Secure, insensible,” &c.

I wished to have made a little trip to the isles of Scilly, but time would not permit. From the Land's End I went to St. Just ; and although they had just enlarged their chapel, it was well filled. One would wonder where the people came from ; for St. Just is but a village, which lies on a point of land among rocks and mines, and appears to have few inhabitants near it. I returned after preaching to Penzance ; and on Tuesday I went to St. Ives, one of the most agreeable towns for situation in Cornwall. It is in

the form of a crescent in the bottom of a fine bay, which opens into St. George's Channel, and a place of considerable trade. The chapel is large; and it was well crowded with many of the better sort, and I think some clergy. I had liberty in pointing out the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. I partly expected to preach the day following at Copperhouse, a place so called on account of many copper-works in the neighbourhood; but as I could only preach at noon, and the people could not leave their work at that hour, I passed on to Redruth. Here the enlarged chapel was well filled, and I was entertained with much kindness and respect by a family whom I have heard much spoken of, namely, the Harpers; and a number of Christian friends gave me the meeting. The Methodists have Redruth to themselves: theirs may be called the established religion; for the church is a considerable way out of the town; and there are no Dissenters, except a very few Quakers.

Thursday, 22d.—I preached at Gwennap, and the enlarged chapel would not hold the people; but the wind was so high that I could not preach abroad; so as many crowded in as possible, and the rest around the windows. The next day I went to St. Agnes. Cornwall abounds with saints; and I hope with many of the right sort, even such as God hath made saints. This is a small town, which lies among rocks and mines; and the people have enlarged their chapel, which was well filled; and as there had been a considerable work of God, I enforced Heb. ii. 1, and hope it was not in vain, though I was sorry to hear of a refractory spirit manifested in some. However, as my visit in Cornwall was that of friendship, and in no official capacity, I did not think it proper to

interfere in any disputes, except by giving a word of advice where I thought it was likely to do good. From thence I returned through Redruth to Tuckingmill, a small village containing but a few houses; yet there is a chapel, which will contain, perhaps, twelve hundred hearers; and although the afternoon and evening were exceedingly stormy, yet the chapel was well filled, and I had much liberty. The night continued very stormy, and there was no probability that either the chapel in Redruth or Gwennap, where I was to preach on Sunday, would contain half the people that were expected to attend; for it was given out twenty miles round about, that I should preach in what the Cornish term "the Pit," but Mr. Wesley calls an "amphitheatre;" that is, a large hollow, which will hold abundance of people; and it is astonishing how it excites the country to flock together, when it is reported that anyone is to preach there. Moreover, it is remarked, that it is sure to be a fair day when there is to be preaching in the Pit: however, my faith was put to the stretch, as it was so stormy a night. But I was told, a number of young men spent a part of the night in prayer. Yet in the morning it looked very unpromising, and was so wet, that I was obliged to preach in the chapel at Tuckingmill, and we squeezed as many in as we could. However, before I had done, it cleared up, and, the sun breaking out, the street in Redruth was quite dry at noon, and at half-past one thousands were gathered. I stood in the most vacant place, and urged upon them that awful passage, Job xiv. 10. All were still as night, listening with deep attention; even the Quakers mixed in the crowd. From thence we hastened to the Pit; and, to be sure, it was amazing to see horse and foot

flocking from all parts, and some carriages. My friend who accompanied me said, he thought there were a thousand horses: however, I suppose, there might be some hundreds; and a multitude of poor little ragged boys on all sides came to earn a penny by holding the horses, so that they were kept at a proper distance from the congregation. I do not remember to have preached to so great a multitude, except once on the Green at Glasgow. It was truly an awful sight. But I cannot say that I had that liberty which I have sometimes. Indeed, I had a charming time at Tuckingmill in the morning, and at Redruth at noon; but I seldom find that sweetness three times running. Besides, I had exerted myself the two former times, particularly in the street at Redruth, so that my strength rather failed me, insomuch that I grew somewhat hoarse; and perhaps my gracious Lord might see it meet to leave me a little to myself, seeing He takes gracious methods to hide pride from our eyes, and keep us dependent upon Himself. It is amazing how such a spot should ever be chosen for a place to preach in, amid rocks and mines, and scarcely a house near it; and that it should continue to excite the curiosity of people to come from such a distance to hear the word of God in a wilderness. As I had a considerable distance to travel, and preach twice the next day, it was thought advisable to proceed to Truro, as that would shorten my journey nearly ten miles; so here I rested in peace and plenty, humbled under a sense of God's amazing goodness and my own vileness, yet hoping I had done something for Him.

Monday, 26th.—We set out rather early, and stopped at a place called the Indian Queens, to

breakfast. From this neighbourhood came that worthy man, John Murlin; and I saw his elder brother, a serious old man, ripening for glory; though I could perceive him very anxious respecting the legacy left by his brother. I told him, it was in safe hands, and would be paid at the appointed time. What a temptation, or a snare, is this world, even to good men! We got to Bodmin by twelve o'clock, twenty-three miles from Truro, where I preached to the smallest congregation I had in Cornwall. Though it is a principal town, and where the assize is held in summer, yet I find our interest is small in it.

From Bodmin I crossed the country, about fifteen miles, to Port-Isaac. The road was so very bad as almost to set us fast in some places; and very hilly. However, we got in time to preach to a crowded audience, and were cordially received by an old disciple, an Israelite indeed. The situation of this small town is singular. It lies at the bottom of a narrow creek, and in a narrow compass, surrounded on all sides by very high hills, except the opening to the sea; and it does not appear that it can be enlarged, it is so enclosed on every side. However, the Gospel has found its way thither for many years, and not in vain.

Tuesday, 27th.—We had to remount the hills out of Port-Isaac to Camelford, where I was to preach at noon; and although it was the middle of the day, and not many Methodists in the town, yet we had the chapel filled: and a precious time it was, I believe, to the people as well as myself; so that I trust my labour here was not in vain. But, having a stage of sixteen miles to Launceston, where I had to preach in the evening, we did but just arrive in time

to preach to a crowded audience; and I had considerable liberty in describing the way to the kingdom to be through tribulation. Here I hope the word was made profitable; and here ended my excursion through Cornwall. This I must say for the Cornish, both preachers and people, they treated me with very great kindness, and showed me much greater respect than I deserved. There would be no great cross in itinerating in this manner, where in every place all things we wish for are made ready to one's hand. Groups of kind friends waiting in every place to receive one, and crowds assembling to hear, are exceedingly pleasing; and all the company in every friend's house looking up to one, as to a superior species of being. How flattering to vanity! and what need of an humbling ballast! How different is this state of things from that of our Circuits in the general, where we must experience an humbling reverse! Amid all the kindness in Cornwall, the Lord gave me a sense of my own unworthiness, which kept me low in my own esteem.

I wished to pay another visit to the loving society at Plymouth-Dock, on my return, but time would not permit; and I did not know but that I was to preach at Tiverton in Devonshire the next day. It was necessary that I should be at Exeter by noon, a distance of forty-four miles. I therefore rose early; and truly the morning was lovely, and the front of my chamber opened into a fine country; the winged choristers were all awake, and their different notes were charming; but my business required haste. I got to Exeter by one o'clock; but hearing nothing from Tiverton, I was very glad to rest where I was. Exeter is delightfully situated. I walked through the spacious cathedral, saw the monuments, the

library, the skeleton of the young woman who was executed some years ago, as I was told, for the murder of her child. But, however agreeable the situation of this city is, religion is at a very low ebb in our Connexion: I had the smallest congregations here that I have seen since I left Bristol. Yet there are a few sensible lively souls even in Exeter.

Thursday, 29th.—I preached at Taunton, and looked into the large church from whence that great and good man Joseph Alleine was ejected. I venerate the places where those worthy men laboured; and what a loss did the Church of England sustain when her rulers expelled from her pulpits two thousand good men, among whom were Joseph Alleine, Richard Baxter, and Philip Henry!

Friday, 30th.—I came safely to Bristol, and found my dear family all tolerably well. All thanks be to God! I stand amazed at His goodness to me: even this little tour impresses a fresh sense of His mercies upon my mind. But I feel pain that the work does not thrive as I could wish to see it in this Circuit; and yet there are many precious souls, whom I have cause to love, and who, I believe, walk humbly with their God. The Conference drew on; and a brother having been dead some time at Lambeth, and leaving me joint-executor with his widow, the property being in London, in different hands, and a considerable number of legatees, it seemed necessary that I should be on the spot, in order that I might do my best to see the property collected, and the legacies paid. I therefore left Bristol after being one year there, and removed to London, where I and my family arrived August 20th, 1800. Having now taken notice of the most material matters which have occurred during forty years of my ministry,

and sixty of my life, I must here close, perhaps finally. The above space of time has been filled up with mercies innumerable from my gracious God. He hath borne with my numberless blunders, inconsistencies, and imperfections ; and I hope the time and labour have not altogether been in vain. A vast number of my junior brethren have got before me, having finished their course, and entered into the joy of their Lord, while I am still in the wilderness, still in the field of battle. They have entered the haven of rest, while I am

“Still toss’d on a sea of distress,
Hard toiling to make the bless’d shore.”

Too, too many, during the above period, have turned aside, and plunged back into the world again, while I, O infinite mercy ! O boundless love ! have been happily preserved ; preserved even when I otherwise should have departed from the living God.

“Turn aside, a sight admire,
I the living wonder am ;
See a bush that burns with fire,
Unconsumed amidst the flame.”

As it is highly probable I may never trouble the public with any farther account of so unworthy a subject as myself, there is one thing which I would pointedly notice to all my brethren in the ministry ; and that is, to beware of spending too much time in company among their richer acquaintance ; but spare a little to look into the habitations of the poor. The poor have the Gospel preached to them ; our Lord was poor ; He associated with the poor ; and, I can assure my brethren, we have the greatest number of pious souls among the poor. Do look into their

poor habitations: they cannot invite you to a dinner or a supper; they have it not in their power; but if you look into their cottage or garret, they will receive you as an angel of God: and, as I hope you wish to do them good, I can assure you that a few words spoken to them personally will do them more good than a hundred pompous and popular harangues. If this method of visiting the poor in their own habitations were more attended unto both by preachers and leaders, it would have a blessed effect, and save many from backsliding, and consequently from eternal destruction. What I recommend to others I try to do myself, and always have satisfaction therein. My day is far spent; and I wish to do all the good I can, so that I may fight the good fight of faith, and finish my course with joy, through my never-failing Redeemer.

THE following account of Mr. Taylor's death was given in the Methodist Magazine:—

DIED at Birch-House, near Bolton, in Lancashire, on Tuesday morning, October 15th, 1816, the Rev. Thomas Taylor, aged almost eighty years. From the year 1761, when he was appointed by Mr. Wesley to a Circuit, he continued his itinerant labours till the last Conference. Then the pressure of age, with the effects of fifty-five years' hard ministerial labour, obliged this holy, faithful, and resolute minister of Christ to acknowledge that he was no longer able to fill the place of an effective man in the Connexion. But in ceasing to be an itinerant, he remitted no labour to which his strength was

adequate; nay, about the close of his eminently useful life, he exerted himself beyond his strength. But his heart and soul were in the work of God; and hence, when labouring under that complaint which terminated in his death, he would ascend the pulpit to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Having engaged to preach in the Bolton chapels on Sunday, the 13th of October, and the following day, he arrived at the house of his esteemed friend, Roger Holland, Esq., on the preceding Tuesday. The following account of the remaining days of his life is taken from a letter written by Mrs. Holland to his son-in-law, Mr. Robert Miller:—

"ON Tuesday evening, October 8th, Mr. Taylor arrived at Birch-House, in his usual state of health and cheerfulness. Wednesday morning, he observed that he did not think he had passed so comfortable a night for twelve months. He attended to his studies as usual, and occasionally walked to see a few poor people.

"On Saturday night he had two violent attacks of his complaint, which obliged him to sit up till he was a little recovered; but though he felt himself much enfeebled, he accompanied Mr. Holland to Bolton the next morning, where he preached from, 'Our light affliction,' &c. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.) It was observed by his hearers, that he was particularly animated, and that his views of glory, in the discussion of his subject, were more than usually bright. He dined at Mr. Rothwell's, where he evidenced a spirit of lively gratitude and animated praise. But the effects of his morning exertions soon became so visible in much weakness and bodily pain, that his

friends judged it improper for him to undertake the evening service; Mr. Holland, in particular, was very importunate in dissuading him from the attempt. No entreaties, however, could dissuade him from his purpose of setting out for the old chapel; in going to which, he was obliged frequently to pause, and once for the space of nearly a quarter of an hour. Having arrived at the chapel, he went into Mr Grindrod's, where he remained a short space, in order to gain breath; during which time, a local preacher began the service. When he had concluded prayer, he found the veteran saint ready to enter upon his office, which he did, by taking these words for his text, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' He seemed to have forgotten all his weakness, and to be unusually led out, whilst explaining the passage. In one part of the discourse, he raised himself, and said with great emphasis, 'I should like to die like an old soldier, sword in hand.' That night he had another attack in his breast, which painfully interrupted his sleeping, and caused considerable exhaustion the following morning; notwithstanding which, he spent two hours in visiting the sick, but the effort was attended with a great deal of difficulty. He again preached with animation in the evening, from 1 Corinthians ii. 12.

"Through the whole of the evening he was particularly cheerful, and often very spiritual. He retired about eleven; and intending to accompany Mr. Holland to Manchester the next morning, he shaved before he went to bed. On Tuesday morning Mr. Holland, thinking that he lay longer than usual, as he did not hear him stir, tapped at his door; but no answer being returned, he entered the room, and

found him lying by the bed-side at full length, more than half-dressed, but perfectly composed, as in a quiet sleep: the chariots of Israel and the horsemen had come, and the prepared saint had ascended with his bright convoy."

Grateful to Mrs. Holland for the foregoing account, and for the honourable testimony which she has given in favour of Mr. Taylor's eminent piety and usefulness, we shall briefly mention a few particulars relative to his character.

1. Throughout the long course of his ministry, so uniform was his Christian walk; that he never brought the slightest reproach upon his sacred profession. The present race of Methodist preachers know, from experience, little or nothing of the difficulties with which the first race had to contend. Hunger, cold, weariness, bad lodgings, and persecution, in various forms, were their lot; and of each of these Mr. Taylor had his share. He lived long enough to see Methodism in comparative honour, and himself and brethren, in general, comfortably provided for. But so great a change in his circumstances had no bad effect upon his spirit, temper, or conduct. He was the same man of God, when in London, Manchester, Liverpool, &c., that he had been when subjected to more than ordinary privations. A great change in outward circumstances, especially from penury and reproach to plenty and honour, has frequently proved fatal to many; but from such a change Mr. Taylor suffered no physical, mental, or moral injury.

2. The diligence which he used for the purpose of improving his mind, that he might be able to feed the people with knowledge and understanding, is

highly creditable to his memory, as a Christian minister. He drew his divinity from the sacred volume; and such was the estimate which he set upon that pure source of truth, that, in addition to his perusing particular parts of it, upon numberless occasions, there is sufficient ground to believe that he read the whole of it regularly through upwards of fifty times. But his extraordinary attention to the Scriptures did not make him inattentive to those works with which a minister of Christ ought, if possible, to be acquainted. Hundreds upon hundreds of ancient and modern publications on theology, sacred and profane history, natural and moral philosophy, &c., he read with care and attention.

3. He was a man of strict order, punctually attending to whatever he took in hand; and perhaps few have ever excelled him in the practice of that very important, but much-neglected duty, the redeeming of time. He was too sensible of its value, to waste any part of it in trifling conversation, or mere complimentary visits. His not ordinarily suffering his hours of study to be broken in upon may possibly have induced some to imagine that his prevailing disposition was unsocial, if not morose; but those who knew him well were of a different opinion.

4. His devoting two hours every day (Sundays and Conference time excepted) to visiting and relieving poor and afflicted persons, proves that he was a true philanthropist.

5. To the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists he was a steady and firm adherent; and he manifested, upon all occasions, a sincere and cordial love to the objects of his pastoral care. Meantime he was so far from being a bigot, that he esteemed and loved as brethren all, however opposed to him in matters

of opinion, who, he had reason to believe, were true followers of the Lord Jesus.

6. By continuing to walk humbly and closely with God, and to be diligent in reading and study, he retained to the last the spirit of preaching, as well as the talents, by which he had been enabled so long to feed those of the flock of Christ who sat under his ministry.

7. Mr. Taylor's views of both the law and the Gospel were clear and distinct; and hence, while he maintained that evangelical obedience is not only a fruit of faith, but indispensably necessary in order to its being retained, he did not neglect to inculcate, as a truth of vital importance, that the holiest men on earth are every moment indebted to the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, for their continuance in a state of acceptance with God. He did not glory in his works; for he well knew that, however sincerely and conscientiously performed, they could not stand the rigour of Divine justice; and therefore he availed himself of the covenant of mercy, not that he might sin with impunity, but that, notwithstanding all his defects, of which he had an exquisite and humbling sense, he might still be able to "worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Some preachers, by not entertaining similar views, have exhibited the Gospel in a mutilated state, and preached it in a dry, cold, and unedifying manner. So did not the venerable Thomas Taylor: hence the Divine unction which generally accompanied his sermons.

We cannot see the heroes of Methodism, however aged, drop one after another into eternity, without being sensibly affected. We love, nay, we venerate the memory of those men of God, who, with little

less than apostolical intrepidity, in breaking up the ground which we now peaceably occupy, endured many a fight of affliction. But they rest from their labours, and we are hastening to the conclusion of ours.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,” whether occasioned by the lapse of “slowly-rolling years,” or an acute or lingering disease. The time, place, and circumstances of the death of each of them are all under the control and direction of Him who, for the welfare of His people, regulates and overrules every event. Mr. Taylor’s death was so sudden, that he experienced little or nothing of the formality of dying. His strong and well-formed body was greatly worn by age; but, like a machine well constructed in all its parts, and all those parts so skilfully united as to wear alike, it continued to be a suitable and, upon the whole, a comfortable habitation for his spirit, till at last

“The weary springs of life stood still.”

Next to Mr. Wesley, he filled the place of an effective man considerably longer than any other Methodist preacher.

THE Conference thus speak of this excellent man in their annual Minutes:—

THOMAS TAYLOR, who was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus in early life. He commenced his itinerant career in the year 1761; and was a most laborious, faithful, and eminently successful minister of Christ, for the long space of

fifty-six years. In the early part of his public life, when Methodism was but in its infancy, he had, together with his contemporaries and fellow-labourers in that great work, to endure much from hunger, cold, weariness, and persecution; but he met and surmounted those difficulties with a truly apostolical intrepidity; and, under circumstances which would have overwhelmed a mind of ordinary energies, he pursued, with indefatigable assiduity, a course of study and labour of uncommon magnitude. Though for many of the first years of his ministry he had to take long and frequent journeys, and to preach a great number of sermons, yet, by habits of early rising, and a diligent improvement of his whole time, he acquired a respectable share of useful literature. To this, however, he conscientiously avoided giving a prominence in his preaching, and made it strictly subordinate and subservient to the doctrines of the Gospel. His discourses, which were always short, were chiefly of a practical and experimental character; and to the last he was very fervent and impressive in the pulpit. He was a lover of Christian discipline, as established among the Methodists; and was zealous and firm in its enforcement. As a pastor, he evinced the most commendable diligence, visiting, where it was at all practicable, every part of the flock of Christ under his care; for which purpose he generally set apart two hours in the day: and this practice he continued to the last week of his life. In his family, he set the Lord always before him, studying how he might best promote the salvation of his household; and in the worship of the family he was most regular, and delightfully solemn. In the private circle of his friends he was cheerful and improving, knowing well how to combine

rational instruction with spiritual edification. His natural temper was independent and irritable; but these imperfections were so habitually under the subduing influence of Divine grace, as to be rarely perceptible even to his most intimate friends; and in the decline of life, he imbibed a heavenly sweetness of spirit which was seldom interrupted. In short, the good degree of learning which he attained, his extensive labours, his unceasing activity in the best of causes, the almost unparalleled length of his course of efficient ministerial duties, and, above all, his close and constant walk with God, and universal devotedness to His glory, placed him in the highest class of the servants of God on earth; and, we have no doubt, he is now found near the throne of Him in whose blood he had washed his robes. His death was sudden, and to his friends unexpected; but, with respect to himself, it was doubtless followed by an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. He died at Birch-House, near Bolton, the residence of his friend Roger Holland, Esq., on the 16th of October, 1816, in the seventy-ninth year of his age; having, only a few hours before his departure, in an animated sermon, set forth the deep things of God.

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER'S DEATH.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE REV. THOMAS TAYLOR.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

SERVANT of God! well done,
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle's fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy;

—The voice at midnight came,
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame,
He fell,—but felt no fear.

At home amidst alarms,
It found him in the field;
A veteran slumbering on his arms,
Beneath his red-cross shield:
His sword was in his hand,
Still warm with recent fight;
Ready that moment at command
Through rock and steel to smite.

It was a two-edged blade,
Of heavenly temper keen;
And double were the wounds it made
Where'er it glanced between:
'Twas death to sin,—'twas life
To all that mourn'd their sin;
It kindled and it silenced strife,
Made war and peace within.

Stout hearts before it fell,
Subdued by wrath and love;
'Twas dreadful as the flames of hell,
Bright as the beams above:
Heroes were wont to name
The weapons of their might;
This was a brand of matchless fame,
—The word of God, in fight.

Oft with its fiery force
His arm had quell'd the foe;
And laid, resistless in his course,
The alien armies low:
Bent on such glorious toils,
The world to him was loss;
But all his trophies, all his spoils,
He hung upon the cross.

At midnight came the cry,
 “To meet thy God prepare ;”
He woke,—he caught his Captain’s eye;
 Then, strong in faith and prayer,
His spirit with a bound
 Burst its encumbering clay,
—His tent at sunrise on the ground
 A darken’d ruin lay.

The pains of death are past,
 Labour and sorrow cease;
And life’s long warfare closed at last,
 His soul is found in peace.
—Soldier of Christ, well done!
 Begin thy new employ;
Sing, while eternal ages run,
 Thy Master and His joy.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN FURZ.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

1. I WAS born in the year 1717, at Wilton, near Sarum. My parents were honest, but ignorant of true religion. My father never went to church; my mother and her children did. When I was about ten, I began to be afraid of death and hell, and prayed to God to have mercy upon me. At eleven I durst not keep company with boys that cursed and swore. I gave myself to reading, and went constantly to church. Yet I was more and more uneasy, and had sometimes no sleep in the night, through the dread that was upon my spirits. At fifteen I became a constant communicant. At seventeen, wherever I was, in bed, within the house or without, I had something speaking within me, "One thing is wanting." I read more, and prayed more; but so much the more did this cry echo within me. In this state I continued two years, having no kind shepherd to guide me. I was one day standing in the house, when this inward voice was repeated oftener than usual. I looked up, and

said, "O God, what is this one thing?" It was instantly answered, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

2. I was astonished; for I thought I had always believed. However, I thought, "I will read over all the Bible, and try whether I believe or not!" I took my Bible, and opened it on these words: "The devils believe and tremble." I thought with myself, "They tremble, and so do I for the same cause: I too am afraid of the judgment of the great day." I took my Bible again, and read, "We know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." I laid it down again, and thought, "The devils know Him, and tremble; I tremble, but I do not know Him." Now I saw that I was without God in the world; and the sorrows of my heart were enlarged. I had read, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself;" but I knew I had not the witness. I reasoned much concerning this, wishing I could find some man that could tell me what it is to believe.

3. One Sunday morning the minister's text was, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." I stood up, and looked as earnestly at his mouth, as ever a hungry man looked for food; expecting every moment that he would tell me what it was to believe. He did say something about faith, but I did not understand it. I now thought, "I do not believe; I shall surely be damned." When I came to the church-door, I could not restrain myself any longer, but burst into a flood of tears, and cried aloud. The people came about me, and asked me why I wept. I said, "I shall go to hell; for I do not believe." They answered, "Young man, if you go to hell, no one in the town will go to heaven."

4. From this time for nearly two years I was

in despair. My sleep in a great measure departed from me. My appetite was gone; my flesh wasted away, and I grew exceedingly weak. My mother observing it came to me and said, "My dear child, can I do anything for you?" I said, "Yes, carry me to Mr. Smith;" a Dissenter, to whom many that were in trouble came for advice. She carried me to him without delay. He asked what ailed me. I said, "Let my mother and the men that brought me go out, and I will tell you." They went out, and I said, "I believe I shall die soon, and I am afraid of going to hell." He answered, "You are melancholy: you must seek for some merry company." I was shocked, and called aloud for my mother, who stood without, to come and carry me home; which she did. As I sat down in the street without the door, three young men passing by looked at me, and said they were sorry to see me look so bad. They stayed some time with me, talking merrily and jocosely. When they parted from me, I thought myself something better. They called on me again. I was pleased with their conversation, and endeavoured to stifle my convictions. I recovered my strength daily; and one evening, as I was walking with them, I asked, "Where did you get all these merry jests?" They said, out of such and such books, which they named. I said, "If it please God, I will go in the morning to the stationer's, and buy one of the best of them."

5. As soon as I left my companions I went home. But I had only just sat down in a chair, when a Divine conviction seized me, and I thought, "Lord, what have I been doing?" I dropped to the earth utterly senseless. About midnight my senses returned; and I found my mother weeping at my

bed-side, attended by some of her kind neighbours. I now found such a spirit of prayer, as I never found before. My heart cried, "Lord, spare me a little, before I go hence and am no more seen." For I clearly saw, if I died in my present state I must perish for ever.

6. But it was not long before my new companions visited me, and expressed a sorrow for my late affliction. I was soon persuaded to walk with them, and in a while began to be pleased again with their company and conversation. But one Sunday morning as I was in bed, it seemed to me as if one griped me by the arm. At the same moment a voice went through my heart, saying, "Go to the meeting." I was much surprised, and felt much pain in my arm. However, it being very early, I composed myself to sleep again. But I had not lain long, when I heard the same voice as before. I rose, and walked in the garden; but still found something within me saying, "Go to the meeting." I knew not what to do. I had ever been a zealous member of the Established Church, and thought it not right to go to a Presbyterian meeting. I seemed resolved not to go; but the impression on my mind was such, that I could have no rest unless I went. When I came in, the minister was in his sermon. I had no sooner sat down than he uttered these words, "Remember the promises you made to God on a sick bed." I thought he spoke to me. I remembered how earnestly I had prayed to God to spare me a little longer. I returned home in deep distress, thinking, "I am still the same unhappy creature, lost to all sense of good. All my resolves are come to nought, my promises broken, and I am left a poor guilty sinner."

7. All my former works did now indeed appear to me no better than filthy rags. I said, "I have lied unto Thee, O God, when I said, 'My spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour;' and when I professed, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ,' while I knew nothing about it." A few days after, I saw an unusual number of people flocking together, and asked whither they were going. One answered, Mrs. Hall's son is come from Oxford, and is going to preach in the Presbyterian meeting. Will you go and hear him?" After some pause I went. While I was musing with myself, he pointed out with his finger, as though he pointed at me, and said vehemently, "There are two witnesses that are dead and buried in the dust, that will rise in judgment against you." He took up his Bible, and said, "Here are the two witnesses, that have been dead and buried in the dust upon your shelf, the Old Testament and the New." I felt what was spoken: I remembered that my Bible was covered with dust, and that I had written my name with the point of my finger on the binding. Now I thought, I had signed my own damnation on the back of the witnesses.

8. I went home, no one speaking to me on the way, or I should have wept aloud. I walked in the garden; but I was afraid the earth would open and swallow me up, or that infernal spirits would be permitted to drag me to the bottomless pit. I went to bed; but the terrors I felt in the night are beyond all that I can express. About midnight I sat up in bed, and said, "Lord, how will it be with me in hell?" Just then a dog began howling under my window, and I thought, "There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!" Every joint

now trembled; the terrors of the Lord seized my soul; the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me. I rose early in the morning, but did not attempt to pray, as I thought there was no mercy for me. As I walked in the garden, bewailing my misery, and wishing I had never been born, God put a desire to pray into my heart, and those words into my mouth: "Lord, are there no bowels of mercy for such a sinner as I am?" I went and kneeled down at the feet of my bed. Instantly I felt as if cold water ran through every vein. I started up, and ran into the garden, and thought, "God will not suffer me to pray. He has driven me from the throne of grace: there is no mercy for me." I went a second time, but had no sooner kneeled down, than I was surprised as before: I flew again. As soon as I came into the garden, I looked round, and said, "Who will show me any good?" I walked weeping, till I saw a dead toad, and said, "O that I had been a toad! Then I should have had no soul to lose." I then felt a fresh desire to pray. I went again into my chamber, and kneeled down. But I was more surprised than ever. I thought the earth moved under me. I leaped down stairs, and fell to the ground; but strong desire constrained me to ask, "Are there no bowels of mercy for me?" Before I could utter it, I heard a small, still voice, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." What a change did I feel! My sorrow was turned into joy; my darkness into light! My soul was filled with love to God, for His unspeakable mercies. Now I did indeed draw water out of the wells of salvation. Yea, a fountain was opened in my heart, springing up into everlasting life. My tongue could not express the feelings of my heart; I was lost in speechless rapture. I now knew what it

was to believe: I knew on whom I believed; even on Him that justifieth the ungodly. Being justified by faith, I was at peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. My bands were broken in sunder, and my captive soul was set at liberty.

9. I that before was dead in trespasses and sins was now made alive to God. I sat in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. I was as in a new world. If I walked out into the open field, everything showed forth the glory of God. If I looked at the sun, my heart said, "My God made this, not for Himself, but us." If I looked on the grass, the corn, the trees, I could not but stand and adore the goodness of God. My Bible also was become a new book: it was sweeter to my soul than honey to my tongue. I had near communion with God day and night. And O how I longed for all the world to know what I knew! I longed also for a companion in the grace of God, to whom I could communicate what I felt: yea, I thought I would tell the trees of the wood, if I could make them understand, what God had done for my soul.

10. One day as I was going across the market-place, I passed by a man at his labour. I felt all that was in me run out after him, in a manner I never felt before. I passed by him again and again; and it was still the same. I thought, "I can tell this man anything," though I only knew him by sight, and had often heard, his father used to say, with his hand on the breast, "I have Christ in my heart." I asked him, "Do you believe your father was a good man, and that he is gone to heaven?" He answered, "I do. He died singing the hundredth psalm, just as he uttered these words,

'O enter ye His gates with praise!'

I asked again, "Are you willing to live his life, and to die his death?" He answered, "The Lord knows that I am!" "But," said I, "do you believe there is any such thing as knowing our sins forgiven now?" He looked at me, and paused, and then said, "I will tell you a fortnight hence."

11. That day fortnight I went to his house, took him aside, and told him, "Now you are to answer my question." He said, "I will: I do believe that there is such a thing as knowing our sins forgiven now. I have been seeking it ever since I saw you: but I have not found it." I desired him to walk with me to my house; I took him into my chamber. We sat down together, and I told him freely what troubles I had passed through, and how God had delivered me. Then I asked, "Are you desirous of the same blessing?" He answered, "The Lord knows that I am." We kneeled down, and I earnestly prayed, that God would make him a partaker of it. When I had done, he started up, and went out of the room in haste, without speaking one word.

12. In the morning, as I was looking out of my door, I heard one man say to another, "Do you hear that John Kirby is run mad?" And about an hour after, I heard another asserting the same thing. In the evening he came to my house, looked earnestly at me, and said, "I am undone." He then instantly turned and went away, giving me no time to speak to him. The next evening he came in the same manner. I was sitting at a table, reading. He struck the table with his hand, and said, "I am undone to all eternity." He then went out hastily. I followed him to his house, and found him sitting silent, looking with an aspect of deep sorrow. His wife sat looking at him. She said to me, "O sir,

our family is ruined." I said, "I hope not." She said again, with a flood of tears, "My husband is distracted. He neither eats, nor drinks, nor sleeps." However, I persuaded him to go to bed, and went home. But I had not been long in bed, before he was knocking at the door, crying out, "For Christ's sake, quickly, quickly." I ran down undressed, and let him in. He clasped me fast in his arms, and said, "I will never go home more, unless you go with me." I put on my clothes, and led him home. As I went I advised him to pray. But he said, "I cannot: if I attempt to pray in my chamber, I am affrighted; and so I am, wherever I attempt it." When I came to his house, I found a most distressed family; his wife, his son, and his daughters all weeping. I desired him to go to bed. He said, he would never go into his chamber more, unless I would go with him. I did so, and saw him in bed, desiring his wife and children to go to bed also, and to be as still as possible. Then I returned home. But I had scarcely been in bed ten minutes, when he was knocking at the door with more earnestness than before: he again said, "I will never go home, unless you go with me." I went the third time. When I came to his house, the family was in bed. I heard his wife weeping. But he repeated, "I will never go into the chamber again, unless you go with me." I said, "O for shame! Your wife is in bed." She cried aloud, "For Christ's sake, do not mind me, but bring my husband up stairs." She was sitting up in bed, in her nightgown, bewailing herself and her family. After seeing him in bed, I kneeled down by the bedside, and commended him to God.

13. In the morning he came to my house again.

But the whole form of his visage was changed. He walked to and fro with tears dropping from his eyes. I asked, "How is it with you now?" He said, "Glory be to God! all is peace." I desired him to sit down, and tell me how this change came. He said, "As soon as you were gone, I looked up, and it appeared to me as if the roof of my house was taken away, so that I saw the firmament. While I was wondering at this, a dark cloud arose, which I thought was a thunder-cloud. The cloud was drawn aside, and left in view Jesus Christ, all besmeared with blood. He looked down upon me, and said, 'I have loved thee, and given Myself for thee.' I felt the word in my heart, and all guilt, and fear, and sorrow fled away. Now I know that I 'have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for my sins.'" We wept together for joy, and praised God for His abundant mercies bestowed upon us.

14. From this time, as the souls of David and Jonathan were knit together, so were our souls knit together in God. We had close fellowship with each other, and sat together as in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Neither of us was content to eat his morsel alone; but what was imparted to one, the other must partake of. We gladly met together every evening, to pray with and for each other, and pour out our souls before God in thanksgivings for all His mercies. Meantime our hearts burned with desire, that all men might know this love of Christ that passeth knowledge. But how to impart to others what we had received, we knew not, or which way to begin.

15. After a while I heard there was a company of Dissenters, that met together at a private house every Sunday evening. I told my friend I was in

hopes they were partakers of the same blessing that we were. I wrote a note to desire leave for me and my friend to come and sit behind them. They sent word, we were welcome to come. When we came, we found about ten of them sitting round a large table, on which were the Bible and the newspaper, with a decanter and glasses. They were quite complaisant. They all rose up, and desired us to sit in rank with them. But I refused, saying, "We will only sit in the place we named, that is, behind you." They then began their evening exercise. First, they ridiculed the vicar, particularly for his covetousness. Next, they drank one to another, and offered the glass to us, but we did not drink. Then they related the faults of the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor; till one read part of the newspaper, which gave occasion to discourse on the state of the nation. At last, one of them read a chapter in the Bible: another, looking at his watch, said, "Bless me! It is time to go home. It is past ten o'clock." "But," said one, "we ought to go to prayer first." But they were not agreed which of them should pray. At last one of them stood up against a back of a chair, spoke a few words, and concluded. My friend and I were kneeling together. I was weary with forbearing, and began earnestly to pray, that God would awaken them, and by His goodness lead them to repentance, that they might know the things which belonged to their everlasting peace. They turned about, and stared at me, as if I had been speaking Greek. However, they told us we should be welcome to come again the next Sunday evening.

16. The next Sunday evening we came again. But one of the company having told his neighbours, that I had preached, I suppose not less than a hundred

persons were standing about the door. The man of the house asked them, "What do you want?" and endeavoured to keep them out. But when he stood aside for me and my friend to come in, they poured in after us. At first he seemed displeased; but soon after called to his wife, and said, "Bring me the Testament." He opened it, sat with it in his hand some time; then, starting up, came to me, with the book open, saying, "If you have a word of exhortation, say on." The first words presented to my view were Romans viii. 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I had had no thought of exhorting or preaching to this hour; but now the power of God came upon me, and enabled me to speak from an experimental knowledge of freedom from condemnation. Now I was able to testify, "By grace I am saved through faith: not for anything that I have done; it is the gift of God." Many of them that stood before me felt the word, and wept much. And from this time, by the help of God, I have continued to preach "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

17. This same gentleman, in whose house I began to speak of the things of God, procured a licence for his house, that none might molest me. I likewise preached in my own house, to all that came and heard me. Their number continually increased: many were convinced of their evil ways; and about fourteen converted to God, who met with me daily, to spend some time in prayer. We loved as brethren, being partakers together of the same grace of God. And we began to suffer reproach together, to show us that "the servant is not above his Lord." Mr.

Conway, the vicar, sent his footman to me with this message: "My master bids me tell you, You have a soft place in your head." I said, "Be pleased to tell your master, The sheep when diseased do not run after the shepherd, but the shepherd after the sheep. Your master passes by my door almost every day. I wish he would call in, and search about my head; and find out what my disorder is, and prescribe a remedy." About two hours after I saw him coming. I opened the door, and waited for him. But when he saw me, he drew farther off, and shook his cane at me, and passed by. He went straight to the Earl of Pembroke's, (the old earl,) and told him, "There is a young fellow in the town who, under a pretence of preaching, makes three riots every week, and disturbs all the inhabitants of the town, from one end to the other." The earl said, "I will send for the young man, and talk with him myself."

18. But instead of sending for me, he sent for the mayor, with whom he used to converse frequently. He had heard me preach himself. Afterwards I learned what passed between the earl and him. "The old priest has been here," said the earl; "but I know not what he would have. He was at first a Dissenting minister. But he came to me and said, his conscience constrained him to conform to the Church, and begged I would assist him to procure ordination. Then he begged me to give him a benefice which was vacant: I did so. He came again within the twelvemonth, complaining he could not live on it. I gave him a second, of two hundred a year. Still he followed me with the same complaint, till I gave him a third: and now he comes to me with a complaint about some young man that preaches. Pray, do you know the man?" He

said, "My lord, perfectly well: he lives but three doors from me." His lordship said, "I said at first, I would send for the man: but I have thought otherwise. Take Lord Herbert and your son, who has taken his degrees at Oxford, and all the aldermen, with you: and you will judge whether it is the preacher who makes the riot, or they that come to disturb him. Afterwards come all of you to dinner with me, and give me your cool judgment."

19. I knew nothing of their coming, till they came; but according to my day, so was my strength. The people, seeing the mayor coming from his own house, attended by Lord Herbert and the aldermen, called one upon another, saying, "My lord, and the mayor and aldermen, are gone to pull down the preaching-house." The rabble ran from all quarters to lend a helping hand. I was praying, when they poured in upon us like a flood. They pushed down some that were on their knees, and trampled on them. Lord Herbert rose from his seat, and said, "I desire you will let me hear quietly." But instead of regarding it, some of the mob gave him a very impertinent answer. The mayor then rose up, and with a loud voice commanded the king's peace. I then said, "My lord and gentlemen, I and those that meet with me are members of the Established Church. We meet together every Sunday, before and after Divine service, to make prayer and supplication with and for one another. And I read a portion of Scripture, and explain it as God enables me." I paused. His lordship bowed his head, and I went on, "I will preach now, as well as I can in this confused noise." I then read, "I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me was not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was

I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." When I had ended, high and low went away, and I and my friends were left alone.

20. When the mayor and his brethren came to the earl's, (I was informed in the evening,) he asked, if they had been at the preaching. The mayor said, "Yes, my lord." "And what have you to say concerning the man that preaches?" The mayor replied, "My lord, I have known him from a child: he has lived an exemplary life from the beginning." The earl said, "Now that we know the truth of the case, we know how to proceed. If I was mayor of the town, the next time that young man preaches, I would go and read the Riot Act." The mayor promised he would: and the next time I preached, he came with the Riot Act in his hand. The mob gathering together, he bade them come near, and then read the Act. They quickly shrunk back: but one of them cursed the mayor, and said he was a Methodist too. He looked upon me, and said, "John, you see I have got a bad character too." I said, "I wish it was true." He said, "So do I; it would be better for me." From this time we had peace.

21. This method not succeeding to his wish, the vicar thought good to try another. He procured the Rev. Joseph Horler, to preach before his lordship. And he did preach as extraordinary a sermon as ever was heard at Wilton. His text was, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God;" "that is," said he, "from the Church. For there is sprung up among us a new religion, called 'Methodism:' it is like the plague. They that have it infect whole families. Now in such a case, if one

were to come and warn you, to shut your door, and keep out the man and his distemper, would not you be thankful? I am now come to do you this kind office. I will describe the persons in three particulars. In the first place, they look just like toads that are crept out from under a faggot-pile. In the second place, they pretend to be led by the Spirit; and when they are 'under His guidance,' as they call it, they look like toads that are crept out of a dung-heap, and croak just like them. In the third place, they look just like toads that are dragged from land's end to land's end under a harrow." I was curious to observe what notice his lordship took of the preacher, who stood bowing at his side as he went out of church. He passed by him without making the least motion, or taking any notice of him at all.

22. After he was got home, he sent a footman to tell the preacher, "If you please, you may come and dine with his lordship." When he came, and was sat down, the earl asked his name. He answered, "My name is Joseph Horler." His lordship then asked, "Mr. Horler, what have you been doing?" He answered, "Preaching, my lord." "What have you been preaching?" "The Gospel, my lord." "I deny that, Mr. Horler: you have been preaching against the Government." He said, "I ask your lordship's pardon; I do not know that I have." "Nay," said his lordship, "have not the king, lords, and commons, all agreed that every Englishman shall worship God according to his own conscience? And are there not licences granted for this very purpose? But pray, who are those toads who creep out of the dung-heap? I hope they are not your neighbours! Let me hear of it, sir, no more. I

will hear no more of it. I will send a note immediately to the vicar, to let me know, when I am in the country, any day that you are to preach, and I will be sure not to be at church that day."

23. Some time after, that honest man John Haime called upon me, and preached at my house. Here our acquaintance and mutual love began, which has continued to this day. He gave me an invitation to come to Shaftesbury. I often went, and found much life and love among the people. I was afterwards invited to Wincanton; Robert Brockway informing me that the Dissenting minister was a pious man, and had promised me the use of his pulpit. And notice was given on the market-day, that a Methodist was to preach there on Sunday. But when Robert Brockway reminded the minister of his promise, he said, "My congregation is not willing." I asked, "Is there any among you that has courage to go through the town, and tell the people, there will be preaching on the common?" One answered, "I will for one." When we were there, a man brought me a table to stand on. Some of my friends from Shaftesbury were with me. After singing a hymn, and spending a little time in prayer, I gave out these words, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" The people were as still as night, and gave good heed to what was spoken, till the minister of Brewham, with an attorney, and Mr. Ring, the town-clerk, came to the outside of the congregation. Some then cried out, "Make way, make way!" But the people stood closer and closer together, till I desired them to open to the right and left, and let the gentlemen come forward. Mr. Ring then read the Riot Act. I

said, "Sir, was there any appearance of a riot here, till you came?" He looked me in the face, and said with the utmost vehemence, "Thou rascal!" Then the blood spouted out in a stream from both his nostrils. He dropped to the earth, crying aloud, "They will say this is a judgment." (No wonder if they did.) All possible means were used to stop the bleeding; but in vain. From that time he was lunatic. He was carried to Bath, and died soon after. In about a fortnight, I was informed, the minister of Brewham died also.

24. Some time after this, one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers preached in the street at Wincanton. While he was preaching, a carrier came with a string of packhorses. The fore-horse had a strap of bells about his neck. The carrier took them off, and put them about his own neck. He then ran in among the people, jumping and dancing with all his might. While he was thus employed, the horse he took the bells from dropped down. They went to him, but he was stone dead. So God, in judgment mixed with mercy, took the horse, but spared the man!

25. Some years before I was a travelling preacher, I was invited to preach on Salisbury Plain, near the New Inn. It being on a Sunday, a very great company was gathered together from the neighbouring villages on both sides of the Plain. Here I was met by John Haime, with a few of our friends from Shaftesbury. As soon as I began to preach, a man came straightforward, and presented a gun at my face; swearing that he would blow my brains out, if I spake another word. However, I continued speaking, and he continued swearing; sometimes putting the muzzle of the gun to my mouth, sometimes

against my ear. While we were singing the last hymn, he got behind me, fired the gun, and burned off part of my hair. But he did not lose his labour; for he was so soundly beaten that he kept his bed for several weeks.

26. The occasion of my leaving Wilton was this. Hearing that Mr. Hall, after all the good he had done, had brought a huge reproach upon the Gospel, and was removed from Sarum, I went to Mr. Marsh, to know the truth of it. He said, "He is gone; but he has not carried away with him what we have received." We hid ourselves awhile; the world rejoiced, and we sorrowed. When the storm was a little over, I went often to Salisbury, and conversed and prayed with some of the poor people. After some time, I was desired to preach in Mr. Hall's chapel. More and more came, till we had a good congregation. Mr. Marsh then took part of the house adjoining to it, for me to live in, and to receive any of Mr. Wesley's preachers that could find time to call. Here I continued about five years. But some of the people being afraid lest I should follow Mr. Hall's example, I left the house, and left off preaching, till being afflicted both in soul and body, and knowing it was the hand of the Lord upon me, I made my mind known to Mr. Wesley, who advised me to go into the west of Cornwall. I did so: I took up my cross, left my wife and children, and went without delay. I was very kindly received by the people. My labours were blessed among them. My bodily strength returned; and great was the comfort that I felt in my soul.

27. Mr. Wesley sent me next into the York Circuit. I went in the simplicity of the Gospel, being only afraid lest I should not be useful. But it

pleased God to give me some fruit here also ; which engaged me to go on, and made me willing to spend and be spent for the souls of men. Afterwards I spent two years in Cheshire and Lancashire, where was the most rapid work of God that I ever saw. At a lovefeast in Manchester, we had eighteen persons justified in an hour. And many experienced a higher work of God, being cleansed from all sin. After deeply hungering and thirsting for righteousness, they were satisfied with it. Some of them, agonizing in prayer, fell to the ground, and cried out, "It is enough, Lord! My cup runs over! Withhold Thy hand, or enlarge my heart." Our leaders, feeling the weightiness of His presence, and the exceeding greatness of His power, were filled with zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls. They dispersed themselves on Sundays, went into the country villages, sung and prayed, and exhorted the people to turn to God. Many came from those villages to hear the word, and great good was done.

28: A poor woman, that lived about ten miles from Manchester, hearing some say, "We have been there, and have found the Lord," told it to a neighbour, and said, "I wish I could go to Manchester and find the Lord." Her neighbour said, "Then why do not you go?" She said, "O dear child, I have no shoes." Her neighbour said, "I will lend you mine." She said, "Then I will go." She came to Manchester on a Sunday ; but knew not where to go. Seeing a gentleman walking in the market-place, she went to him and asked, "Where is it that people go to find the Lord?" He said, "Among the Methodists, as far as I know." She asked, "Where are they?" He answered, "Come, and I will show you." He brought her to the passage

that leads to the preaching-house, and said, "Go in there." Thomas Woolfinden came to her, and asked what she wanted. She said, "Is this the place where people find the Lord?" He went and called John Morris, one of the leaders; to whom she told all that had happened. He took her in, and placed her near the middle of the room, and advised her to look at none but the preacher. She took his advice, and about the middle of the sermon cried out, "Glory be to God, I have found the Lord!" which she repeated over and over, being filled with joy unspeakable.

29. There was likewise a glorious work of God at Liverpool. Many were enabled to repent and believe the Gospel; and many believed that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all unrighteousness. The same flame broke out at Bolton, at Macclesfield, at Congleton, and at Burslem. One instance of the goodness of God at Congleton deserves a particular notice. Two men were there, pot-companions, David and Samuel. David made it his business to stand in the street near the time of preaching, and swear at those that were going to it. About this time we had many remarkable conversions. At this he seemed much perplexed, and asked his companion, "What can this be? What the d—l is it that they do to the people to convert them? I have a good mind to go and see." Accordingly, both of them came. But after they had sat about a quarter of an hour, David started up, and said, "I will stay here no longer." He attempted to run, but quickly dropped down. However, he rose, and with some difficulty got home. He went straight to his chamber, and got to bed. He turned himself a few times; then leaped up, saying, "I will lie here

no longer." He ran into the fields, and then wandered up and down all the night. In the morning he came home, went into his shop, and thought he would go to work. He heated his iron in the forge, and lifted up his hammer over his head. But he imagined the devil was just behind him, ready to carry him away. He let fall his hammer, ran out of the shop, and went to the fields, where he wandered all day. In the evening a farmer, passing by, said, "David, why are you not at your work? I have been three times at your shop to-day; but you were not to be found." David answered, "I think I shall work no more." The farmer asked, "Why so?" He said, "I am afraid I shall be converted." It quickly spread throughout the town, that David was going to be converted. But David protested he would not; he would go and get drunk directly. Accordingly, he went into a public-house, and with all speed drank two quarts of ale, with half a pint of brandy. Three men sitting by, one of them said, "David, you will be converted for all this." David said, "I will convert thee," knocked him down, took him by the heels, and threw him out of the door. He did the same to the second, and the third. Then he caught up the woman of the house, ran with her into the street, threw her into the kennel, saying, "Lie thou there." He went back to the house, tore down the door, broke it in pieces, and threw it into the street. Then he went home: but he was no sooner laid down in bed, than he thought, "Now I am sure the devil will have me." He leaped out of bed, took to the fields, and wandered about all the day. At last he went to his companion, and told him, "Ever since I heard that old fellow preach, I can neither eat nor sleep." "Then,"

said Sam, "take it for a warning, or I will keep thy company no more; else the devil will have us both." David said, "Then what shall we do?" He answered, "Whatever thou doest, I will join the society." David fell a weeping, and said, "If thou dost, so will I, if they will let me." As soon as their design was known, many came running to me, and desired I would not receive either of them. I said, "If they come, I will act according to the best judgment I have." A little before the preaching they came. "Sir," said Samuel, "we are a couple of desperate wicked fellows: but we want to be better. And we beg you, for Christ's sake, to receive us into your society." I said, "Yes, for Christ's sake I will receive you." They looked one at the other, with tears flowing from their eyes, and said, "For Christ's sake receive us now, and let us come in at the love-feast." I said, "I do receive you now, for Christ's sake." After the preaching one desired me to look at David. His body was writhed many ways, and his cries and groans were such as struck terror into those that were near him. I kneeled down and prayed: while I was praying, David started up, and cried aloud, "Glory be to God! my sins are forgiven." At the same time Samuel said, "O precious Lamb of God! all in a gore of blood for me!" David then broke through the people, and caught Sam in his arms, saying, "Come, let us sing the Virgin Mary's song. I could never sing it before; but now my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour!"

"Is anything too hard for Thee,
Almighty Lord of all?"

I married while I was at Wilton. When I was

young, I was frequently at the Earl of Pembroke's. Here I became acquainted with one of the house-maids. We met frequently, and always parted with prayers. She seemed very religious; but when we were married, I soon found my mistake. She was fond of dress, and loved to walk about for pleasure on the Lord's day. She refused to kneel down when I prayed, saying, "I do not love such Presbyterian prayers." I took a book in my hand; but prayed as I did before. Then she kneeled. One evening she was much affected, and rose early in the morning and searched the book to find the prayer. But she could not find it; and afterwards she would not kneel down, whether I had a book or not.

31. One Sunday morning, a little before church-time, being about to go to the sacrament, I came down the stairs. She stood silent at the stair-foot, and then stepped down, struck me in the face, and beat out one of my teeth. She stepped back, sat down in a chair, and wept aloud, saying, "Lord, I cannot help it, I am so tempted by the devil." I went to her, put my tooth into her lap, and went into my chamber again without speaking. It was a sorrowful day with her. The next morning she rose before me: when I came down, I found her weeping. She said, "Can you forgive me?" I made towards the door. She said, "For God's sake, do not leave me." I said, "It is God against whom you have sinned." She wept aloud. I went out, and walked in the fields three hours, praying for her; and when I returned home, I found God had spoken peace to her soul. Nothing would satisfy her, but I must sit on her knees, and hear her praise God. I believe she never lost His love from that hour, but was daily growing in grace. When I set out as a tra-

velling preacher, leaving my children to her care, she never once asked me when I should come home; but in all her letters said, "I find difficulties, but let not that distress you. I am content. Go straightforward in the work that God has called you to."

32. When I was informed she was very ill, I rode seventy miles in one of the shortest days to see her. I found two young women with her, who came to see her at the beginning of her illness, and never left her after. One of them asked, if they should let her know that I was come. I said, "No;" and went in softly to her. She looked at me, and said, "My dear husband, I am going to Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob. I am going to all the prophets, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. I am going to my dear Jesus;" and added,

" 'Not a doubt can arise,
To darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes.' "

No, not for a moment!" She then paused awhile, and said,

" 'Hark! hark how they shout
All heaven throughout! ' "

Lord, let me come up!" and so departed. I found her clothes had been sold, to procure her necessities in time of affliction. So that naked as she came into the world, naked did she return.

33. As to my mother, I was her youngest son, and she was the kindest of mothers. Yet it was not till I had preached a whole year, that she would come to hear me. After she had heard, she was all prayer, and soon found peace; which she enjoyed without

the least interruption to her life's end. Living and dying, she was possessed of that quietness of spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. Her last dying words were, "Lord Jesus, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

34. Many years ago, when I was at Hornby, in Yorkshire, I had a violent illness. None about me expected I should ever recover. When to all appearance I was near death, Mr. Olivers sent Mr. Minethorp to Hornby with a letter, to inform me he would come and preach my funeral sermon, and rejoice over me. The good women that sat round my bed said, "We never had a preacher die here before. We shall have a great company of people to hear the funeral sermon." I heard one of them say, "Now he is going." Meantime the cry of my heart was, "Lord, sanctify me now or never." In that instant I felt the mighty power of His sanctifying Spirit. It came down into my soul as a refining fire, purifying and cleansing from all unrighteousness. And from that instant I began to recover. But O, how slow of heart have I been to believe, and how hard to understand the deep things of God! Before my conversion, I thought, if I repented all my days, and was pardoned at last, it would be a great blessing. But when it pleased God to pardon me, I knew, "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." But I had the same conceptions of sanctification, that I had before of justification. I preached it as a slow gradual work. And while I did so, I gained no ground: I was easily provoked, which made me fear lest after I had preached to others I myself should be a castaway. But now, glory be to God, I feel no anger, no pride, no self-will: old things are passed away. All things are

become new. Now I know, he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him !

THE following character of Mr. Furz was given by the Conference of 1800 :—

JOHN FURZ, an aged servant of the Lord. He travelled many years in our Connexion, and was a zealous defender of our purest doctrines. His mental powers were so decayed, that, for several years, he seemed sunk in second childhood : but he retained his piety, and closed his life in holy triumph, having fought the good fight of faith.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS RANKIN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN the year 1778 I wrote a short and imperfect account of my life in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, which was published in the "Arminian Magazine," in the year 1779. Since that period I have resolved to enlarge that account, by continuing it down to the present time. I have always found narratives of the experience of good men attended with a permanent blessing to my own soul; and particularly so when written in a plain and scriptural manner. I have often lamented that many excellent characters, both ministers and private Christians, have gone to their eternal reward, and have left behind them little or no trace of the dealings of God with them. In some this has been occasioned by the want of ability; and in others, an excess of diffidence and modesty has prevented the church of God from receiving that instruction and consolation which writings of this kind have afforded to thousands. It is this consideration alone which has determined me to enlarge the account of my life already pub-

lished ; as also to add something on that part of which nothing, as yet, has been written. If one soul receive any lasting benefit, to God alone be all the glory !

I was born at Dunbar, in the shire of East Lothian. My parents feared God, and endeavoured to bring up their children in His fear ; all of whom, except two daughters and myself, died young. We were early taught the principles of religion. My father used frequently in the evenings to catechise us, as also the servants. At school we were taught in the same way. By these means the fear of God was early implanted in my mind, so as to make me afraid of doing what other boys did without either fear or shame. While at school I paid close attention to my learning, and made some progress. After a season, I desired my father to let me learn arithmetic ; and, this kind of learning being congenial to my turn of mind, I advanced as far in all the different branches as my master was capable of teaching me. I can say very little about religious impressions while at school ; only I remember that I loved to hear persons converse about religion, and to be in their company. At times I used private prayer, especially when the thoughts of death and judgment came into my mind. When about eleven or twelve years of age I was deeply affected at a sacramental occasion, being permitted to stay at the administration of the ordinance. When I saw the ministers and people receive the bread and wine, and heard the address from the former to the communicants, I frequently burst into tears. At the same time I thought, “ If ever I live to be a man, I will be a minister ; for surely if any persons go to heaven, it must be the ministers of the Gospel.” Those impressions

often remained for days upon my mind, and led me to reading and private prayer. I believe it was about this time that there was a most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, such as some of the oldest people had never seen before. This being in the night season made the awful scene more terrible. My sisters, with myself, cried, and prayed, and were in the utmost terror of mind. This solemn night made a deep impression upon me, and led me to prayer. The remarks my father made upon it served also to fix upon my mind the great importance of being prepared for death and judgment. It was about this time that my father had me taught music and dancing. I soon found that these things had a fatal tendency to obliterate the good impressions which from time to time I had found my mind affected with. Parents and guardians of youth are not sufficiently aware how soon young minds are ensnared and contaminated with what are called "genteel accomplishments." To such as have no savour of Divine things, the above remark may appear trifling, and they may sneer at it; but I aver that young people are in the utmost danger from dancing and music: and I have often been astonished that any parents professing godliness should suffer their own children to be taught these things, or turn advocates for them in others. I repeat once more, that a dancing-school, unless conducted by a very peculiar master, who watches over the youth entrusted to him, will soon pave the way for such scenes as both parents and children (if the grace of God do not prevent) will have cause to mourn over when too late.

In the midst of these trifling amusements the Lord in mercy did not leave me to the depravity and

vanity of my own corrupted heart. I was now thirteen years of age, full of vivacity, with good health, and a remarkable flow of spirits. I had an extraordinary dream, which made a very deep impression on my mind, the effects of which remained for a season. I dreamed that I was with some of my schoolfellows in a place which was open to the east, and I was looking towards the skies in that quarter, when all on a sudden the heavens were in a strange commotion; and soon after there appeared large balls of fire, flying from one end of the hemisphere to the other. I called upon my schoolfellows to behold the awful sight; and, while I was speaking to them, some of the balls of fire fell on the earth, and came very near us. We all then ran for our lives, with the balls of fire flying all around us; when, at last, I thought I got into a house, and felt as if I was secured from all danger. Soon after this I awoke in great agitation, but thankful it was only a dream, and not what I imagined in my sleep,—the day of judgment.

The force of education, and a fear of my father, who was very severe in the government of his children, preserved me from many youthful follies, and from sin, both in word and deed. My constitutional sin was a proneness to anger when offended. I do not recollect that I ever began a quarrel with my schoolfellows, as I always dreaded my father's resentment, and the reproof, if not the chastisement, of my schoolmaster. But if I was affronted, my passion rose so high that I regarded no consequences. The moment my passion subsided, I was ashamed and condemned in my conscience; and often resolved I would never be in a passion any more. The terror I was in lest it should come to my father's ears,

made me always ready to make up matters with the boys. He saw in me too much of his own disposition ; and as he had suffered for it in his own mind, he was the more careful to guard me against its pernicious effects. Such was his strength of body, and undaunted courage of mind, that at the time of the rebellion, in the year 1745, (when I was turned seven years old,) he offered to head a party of his townsmen, in order to attack a party of the rebels, who came to Dunbar for the sake of plunder. He had such love to His Majesty and to our happy constitution, that he was ready to spill his blood in the defence of both. I have heard him say, when he laid the matter before the provost and principal men of the town, if they would have consented, and allowed him the townsmen he would have chosen, he would have secured all the plunder the rebels had taken, and made an end of the detachment.

When I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, my father, after an illness of some months, died in peace. For some time after his death, my mind was seriously and deeply affected ; but, alas ! youthful company, and trifling amusements, gradually drew my mind from the pursuit of those things that made for my present and eternal happiness. I heard my father's advice no more ; and the awe in which I stood of him being removed by his death, I indulged myself in greater liberties than I durst have done during his life. I began to be more fond of music and dancing ; and this led me into vain company, and meetings of young people of both sexes. My mother was too indulgent and fond of me, (as she never had any other son but myself,) and this made her authority but very light over me. I bless God, that I was mercifully preserved from

open wickedness. I do not know that ever I swore an oath in my life; indeed, I felt an entire abhorrence to this vice, and I also detested it in others.

Soon after this, a troop of dragoons came to Dunbar; among whom there were ten or twelve pious men, with several of their wives. As soon as they were settled in the place, they hired a room, and met together for prayer and hearing the word of God every morning and evening. I did not know then, but I have been informed since, that those men were part of the religious soldiers who used to meet with John Haime and others in Germany. The news of soldiers meeting for prayer and praise, and reading the word of God, soon spread through the town: curiosity led many to attend their meetings, and I was one of that number. After a few weeks, some persons had Divine impressions made upon them: the place would scarcely contain the numbers that attended; and it pleased God to make their conversation and prayers a real blessing to several souls. It was not long before several were enabled to testify that they had redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of all their sins. This soon spread abroad, and made a great noise in the town. As I loved their conversation and prayers, and continued to attend their meetings, I wished to have some conversation with them, that I might know what they meant by knowing their sins forgiven. I met with them and others; but I could not understand them when they spoke of God's Spirit bearing witness with their spirits, that they were the children of God. They urged every scripture that occurred to their minds, to prove their point; but my plea was, "that we might be in the favour of God, and not be assured that our sins were forgiven." I granted,

“that some very peculiar holy people might be assured of the Divine favour; but that it was not the privilege of all the children of God.” This, I thought, was supported by Scripture, and the experience of some whose lives I had read; as also confirmed by the conversation of others, who, I thought, were the most pious persons in Dunbar. I believed the soldiers meant well, but that they were grossly mistaken. Their number, however, increased, and the persecution of the tongue increased also; so that some who had been respectable characters had their names cast out as evil. I could not bear this, and determined not to frequent their meetings as I had done before. It was about this time that some of the Methodist preachers came from Newcastle and preached at Dunbar. This also being a new thing, many went to hear them, and I attended among the rest. I was pleased with all I heard; but I do not remember that any particular impression was made upon my mind. After several of the preachers had paid a visit to the place, and many approved of them, Mr. William Darney came and preached also. His manner was such as gave a general disgust to many of the inhabitants; and, young as I was, I joined the number. I thought, I never heard such nonsense, and such preaching about hell and damnation, from any minister in all my life.

About this time I was invited to the wedding of a farmer's daughter, whose family were intimate with my father while he lived, and the intimacy continued with my mother and myself after his death. I accordingly went, and, as usual, joined in the amusements of the day. After I had danced several times, and was now engaged in a country dance, I was overwhelmed with such dread of mind, that, as soon as

it was concluded, I walked out into the fields, (being in summer,) and felt distressed beyond measure. Several came out in search of me; and when they found me, most earnestly entreated that I would go in and join the dance once more. My answer was, "No, I will dance no more this day; and I believe I never shall dance more while I live." They asked, if I were well. I replied, I was; but was determined that no entreaties should make me alter my resolution. I thank God that I have been enabled to keep my word to the present day.

It pleased God to carry on the work of His grace in the souls of those in whom it was begun, and their number increased; so that a society was formed, and class-meetings were established. At that time I did not understand the nature of class-meetings; and therefore was ready to listen to the idle and foolish talking of those who said, "The soldiers had pardoned such and such a one, after they had confessed their sins to them." The ministers of the town had also begun to say several things from the pulpit, as well as in private, that were unfriendly to the meetings of the soldiers, and those who assembled with them. This was attended with unpleasant circumstances, and made several afraid to go to their meetings. While things were in this situation, I had occasion to call upon one who was joined to the society. She was a woman of good sense, and amiable in her manners, and had known me from a child. After the business was settled that I went about, she accosted me in a most kind and pleasing manner, by telling me she had not seen me for some time at their meetings, and asked me the reasons why I absented myself. I made a very improper excuse. I wanted to be gone; for I felt her words to make a

deep impression on my mind, and the force of truth made me very uneasy. The effects of this short conversation rested upon my mind for some time, as also the conversation of others who were members of the society. The short of the matter was this: I had a sincere desire to serve God and to save my soul, as also to be thought a religious young man; but I had not learned to "sell all for the pearl of great price." I still wanted to mingle harmless amusements with the things of God; and therefore I halted between two opinions, and trimmed between the world and the glorious liberty of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I now resolved to leave home, though much against my mother's will. I told her I could no longer bear to attend to that part of the business which obliged me to attend the public-houses to settle accounts with our customers. In short, I came to a determination to spend some time at Leith, two miles from Edinburgh. I had now an opportunity of sitting under the ministry of that pious preacher, Mr. Lindsay, of North Leith. His sermons were greatly blessed to me, and I began to see the plan of salvation with more clearness than ever I had done before. I had an uncle who lived in Edinburgh; and when I went to visit him, I had also an opportunity of hearing several excellent ministers preach the Gospel. These opportunities were not lost; but still I remained an entire stranger to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of my sins. I went on in this manner for some months, till the sacrament was going to be administered, when I determined, for the first time, to go to the Lord's table. I waited on the minister with one of the elders, with whom I was acquainted. He proposed the usual

questions to me previous to my admission to the ordinance. I replied as well as I could, and told him I had a sincere desire to love God, and walk in His commandments. I received the token, and attended on the sacrament accordingly. The sermons, exhortations at the table, and the administration of the ordinance, were attended with a peculiar solemnity, and greatly blessed to my soul. I found such a happiness as I never had known before. This continued for some weeks, and I could truly say that private prayer and reading the word of God were my delight.

It was about this time that I first heard that eminent servant of the Lord Jesus, Mr. George Whitefield. He was preaching his farewell sermon in the Orphan-House yard, in Edinburgh. I had often before had thoughts of hearing him; but so many things had been said to me of him, that I was afraid I should be deceived. I heard him with wonder and surprise, and had such a discovery of the plan of salvation as I had never known before. I was astonished at myself that I should have listened to those idle tales, and thereby have been kept from hearing this burning and shining light, who had been instrumental in the hands of God for the good of so many thousands of souls. When I understood he was going to leave Edinburgh, I was really distressed. I remembered more of that sermon than of all the sermons I ever had heard; and had a discovery of the unsearchable riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus; as also how a lost sinner was to come to God, and obtain mercy through the Redeemer. From this time I was truly convinced of the necessity of a change of heart. I now sought the knowledge of salvation with my whole heart; and the measure of

happiness which I had for some time experienced made me to think I was in the Divine favour. I most sincerely desired to devote my soul and body to the glory of God; when I was, all on a sudden, left in darkness. I began to examine myself, if I had given way to any known sin, or neglected any known duty. So far as I had light to discern, I knew not that I had done anything to cause the amazing change I now experienced. I was indeed very unhappy, and the following lines describe my feelings at that time:—

“Driven out from my God, I wander abroad;
Through a desert of sorrows I rove.”

What to do, or where to go, I could not tell. I thought, “The way of duty is the way of safety, and here will I hold.” I was greatly tempted to believe that all the happiness I had experienced was an entire delusion. Whether from pride or prudence, I cannot say, but I remained silent, and my sufferings were not small. The Lord well knew that it was not a little that would break a headstrong will, and bow a high and proud spirit; and therefore I had cup after cup given me to drink, in order to embitter everything that had opposed, or might oppose, my salvation by grace alone. I mingled my food with weeping, and my complaints with groans that could not be uttered. “I bless Thee for the most severe; and let this stand the foremost, that my heart has bled.”

The time was now drawing near for the sacrament to be administered again; and when I thought of going to the table of the Lord, I was seized with extreme distress. After many painful reasonings, I thought, “Where can I go for ease to my wounded

spirit but to Jesus the sinners' Friend?" I determined, "If I perish, I will perish crying out for mercy." On the Sunday morning I was early at church, waiting upon God in His public ordinances. The subject preached upon was Heb. xii. 24; and the sermon was delivered with many tears and much power from on high. I had often heard Mr. Lindsay with much profit and pleasure, but never before felt what I did under this sermon. My heart was broken to pieces, and now it was that I had a strong hope that the Lord would reveal His love to my heart. I went to the table, and received the bread with a broken, melting, and expectant heart. When the wine was delivered into my hand, the cup being full, a little was spilt on the floor; and that very moment Satan suggested that "Christ's blood was spilt for me in vain!" I scarcely knew how I got the cup to my lips, or how I delivered it to the next person, according to custom. The horror of mind that seized me was inexpressible, and the violence of the temptation continued for several hours. All my pleasing hopes of pardon and peace passed away as a dream. As soon as I got home, I wrestled with God in mighty prayer; but all was dark. Towards the evening a ray of light darted across the dreadful gloom; and hope, with its cheering rays, began to spring up in my soul. I then saw that the dreadful suggestion, that Christ's blood was spilt for me in vain, was only a strong temptation from the powers of darkness. Hopes and fears alternately prevailed, and thus I went on for several weeks.

While I was in this state of mind, I was informed that Mr. Whitefield was expected to preach in the Orphan-House yard next Lord's day. I heard him every time he preached the ensuing week, both even-

ing and morning. O, how precious was the word to my soul! It was sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb. My expectations of Divine mercy rose superior to all my fears. I heard him at every opportunity, till he went to visit Glasgow, and other parts in the west of Scotland. I now saw as well as felt, that I had nothing to do but to come to God, through the Son of His love, and by faith to lay hold on the horns of the altar. I was now led to pray and expect every day and every hour, the moment would arrive when I might say, without a doubt, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His!" O yes! "My soul broke forth in strong desires the perfect bliss to prove." Sometimes I thought I was not ready to lay hold on eternal life. At last I began to reason thus: "Why are His chariot-wheels long in coming?" It then was suggested to me, "Probably you are not one of the elect; and you may seek, and seek in vain." I tasted no pleasant food, my sleep departed from me, and my flesh wasted from my bones; till at last I sunk into despair. One morning, after breakfast, I arose and went into the garden, and sat down in a retired place, to mourn over my sad condition. I began to wrestle with God in an agony of prayer. I called out, "Lord, I have wrestled long, and have not yet prevailed: O, let me now prevail!" The whole passage of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel came into my mind; and I called out aloud, "I will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me!" In a moment the cloud burst, and tears of love flowed from my eyes; when these words were applied to my soul, many times over, "And He blessed him there." They came with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance; and my whole soul was overwhelmed with the

presence of God. Every doubt of my acceptance was now gone, and all my fears fled away as the morning shades before the rising sun. I had the most distinct testimony that all my sins were forgiven through the blood of the covenant, and that I was a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory. What I now felt was very different from what I had experienced of the drawings of the love of God for several years past, and when I first partook of the sacrament. I had now no more doubt of my interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, than of my own existence. I could declare that the Son of man had still power on earth to forgive sins; and that He had pardoned my sins, even mine. Now it was that

“Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song!”

And the cry of my soul was,

“O that all His salvation might see!
He has loved me, I cried,
He has suffer'd and died
To redeem such a rebel as me!”

How many times before, when under the most painful distress of mind, I had wished I had never been born! But now I could bless God that I ever had a being, and fully believed that I should live with God while eternal ages roll. Soon after, I was sent for by a lady, who, observing that I had been in tears, inquired what was the matter. I told her they were not tears of sorrow, they were tears of joy; and then related to her what the Lord had done for my soul. She burst into tears herself, and told me she had been seeking that great blessing for years, but had not found it. She was so deeply affected with what I had told her, and by the power that attended the word, that it was some time before she could

inform me of the business she wished to consult me upon. I have reason to believe it was made an eternal blessing to her soul. As soon as I had finished a little writing which she wanted me to do for her, I went to prayer with her, and left her in tears. I could now look back, and survey the dealings of God with me, even from my childhood; and understood a little of that scripture, "When the Comforter is come, He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Those words were truly fulfilled in me, "I have girded him, although he has not known Me." How many times did I taste of His love, and how sweetly did the Lord draw me by the cords thereof! But youthful vanities and youthful company choked the good seed. Now I saw why it was that the Lord laid His hand so heavily on my soul, and gave me to feel so keenly the distress of a wounded spirit. This embittered every creature and created thing to my mind, and made me completely willing to sell all for the pearl of great price. In a word, everything, the nearest and dearest connexions on earth, became entirely and totally indifferent to me, when they stood in opposition to the salvation of my soul. I was enabled to give up all, and I found all in my adorable Lord and Saviour.

"Great is the work, my neighbours cried,
And own'd the power Divine;
Great is the work, my heart replied,
And be the glory 'Thine."

I now embraced an opportunity of writing to one of the young men belonging to the society in Dunbar, with whom I had had many disputes upon religious topics, and informed him what God had

done for my soul. This soon spread through all the society, and afforded matter of praise to God in my behalf; but to others it was only, "Mr. Whitefield has made him religiously mad!" This was no more than I expected; and when it came to my ears, it gave me very little trouble. But I felt some concern, when I was informed that my mother, whom I sincerely loved, and sisters, were very much distressed on my account. But the providence of God soon took care for this also. I had paid very little attention to my body, so that my health had suffered, till I was not able to attend to my business, and had all the appearance of a rapid consumption. The doctor, who had given me some medicines, and found I grew worse, advised me to remove to my native air. I did so; and when I came to Dunbar, my mother and sisters were in great distress to see me so reduced that walking a hundred yards would tire me. By the use of some simple and efficacious medicines, and the benefit of my native air, after the first week, I gained strength every day; so that in six weeks' time, by the blessing of God, I was restored to my former health and strength. About ten or twelve days after I came to Dunbar, as I knew that many things were said to the minister of the parish concerning me, I waited upon him. He had known me from a child, and he was well acquainted with my parents. As soon as he was informed that I was in the house, he sent for me into his study, and desired me to take a seat opposite to him. After a few words about my health, I told him, that I supposed he had heard a variety of things concerning me. He replied, he had, and wished to converse with me himself about those things. I told him I was come on purpose; and then in all simplicity and godly

sincerity informed him of my experience, and boldly declared what the Lord had done for my soul. He heard me with great attention, and when I had done, gave me several friendly counsels; he then arose from his seat, with tears in his eyes, and put his right hand on my head, and said, "My dear Tommy, I always loved you from a child, and I now love you more than ever: may God bless you, and keep you, and make you a blessing in your day and generation!" After he had done, I thanked him, and he desired me to call upon him whenever I thought proper. My views and pursuits were now directed to one thing,—the glory of God, and the salvation of my own soul, and the souls of others. For some weeks indeed, while I remained ill, I thought of nothing but of dying, and going to heaven; but now, being recovered, I felt such love to the souls of my fellow-creatures that I longed to tell everyone what God had done for my soul. My brethren of the society, to whom I had now united myself, rejoiced over me in the Lord; and as soon as my health enabled me, they called upon me to pray in their class and prayer meetings.

It was at this time that thoughts arose in my mind, that I ought wholly to dedicate myself to God in preaching the Gospel. I had already gained some little knowledge of the Methodist economy; but however I loved the preachers and the people, I determined, if ever I preached the Gospel, it should be as a minister in the Church of Scotland; and I had purposed to go to the college in Edinburgh, in order to prepare myself for the ministry. I now had some conversation with the minister of the parish on this head, and also with the Rev. Mr. Whitefield. The result was, I determined, whether I became a

minister or not, to make it my one and only concern, to live to Him who had lived and died for me. I was enabled to do so, and to dedicate all my spare time to reading, prayer, and Divine improvement. The more I did this, however, the more the thoughts of preaching rested on my mind; but I was called to pass through another school, very different from a college, before that period should arrive.

Being now perfectly recovered, and in some degree established in the ways of God, and my parent and other relations made sensible that the change wrought upon me was from God, and not from man; I was called, by the providence of God, to spend a little time longer in Leith. I soon got acquainted with some pious people, and we frequently met together for prayer and spiritual conversation. This was the case both in Edinburgh and Leith, and was attended with a blessing to my soul. At this time we had no regular society in Edinburgh, but there were a few who were united together in Musselborough, six miles from Edinburgh. Some pious dragoons, of the same regiment with those who first brought Methodism to Dunbar, were the instruments, under God, of bringing the same to Musselborough. Several of the inhabitants were awakened to a sense of their danger, and some were also brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were formed into a society, and the preachers visited them, as well as the society at Dunbar. I went to see them, whenever I had an opportunity, and we mutually partook of the blessing of the Lord. Thus I went on till the month of October, when the providence of God opened a new scene to my view.

I had been disappointed in my expectations of going to the college; and although the thoughts of

preaching would frequently come to my mind, yet I saw no prospect of such a thing taking place. There was, at this time, an offer made to me, of taking a voyage to Charlestown, in South Carolina. I had a cousin in Edinburgh, who was in the mercantile line; and he and another gentleman offered to send several kinds of goods under my care, to dispose of them to the best advantage in that city, and to bring such returns as were most likely to answer the markets at home. As the prospect was flattering, and I understood the business, I entered into an agreement, and accordingly sailed for that place. The passage was long and tedious, but we came at last in safety to Charlestown. One particular inducement for me to undertake this voyage was, the captain was reported to be a pious man, and of an exemplary character. Another was, that as the prospect of dedicating myself to the work of the ministry was closed, I thought it my duty to employ my time and talents in a way that might tend to my worldly advantage. I had consulted my friends and relatives, and all of them seemed to approve of the step I now took. I always had a strong desire to see foreign countries; and now, I thought, I shall have this desire gratified. I did not properly consider that I was but young in the ways of God, and wanted more establishment therein. However, I had a lesson to learn, and the Lord permitted me to take this step, in order that I might in some measure learn it. Whenever the weather permitted, we had prayers morning and evening; and all the officers, and ship's company, as well as passengers, regularly attended. This, in general, was performed by the captain; and sometimes he called upon me to read and pray also. I had been mentioned to him as a religious young

man; and he showed a particular regard for me, both in going out and coming home. He would several times call me into his state-room, so called, and converse with me about the things of God. I soon found that he had formerly experienced a real work of grace upon his soul. I also learned that it was not with him as in times past. It was not long after our arrival at Charlestown, that I had a sad proof that he had fallen from grace. His business exposed him to the company of some merchants and captains of ships, and I observed that he came to his ship several times intoxicated. I was very much grieved to see this, and I once took the liberty to hint it to him. As I was but young, and he upwards of forty, if not fifty years of age, I was afraid he would be offended; but I found the contrary. He was much of a gentleman in his manners, very different from most sea-captains; which made him receive what I said in a way I scarcely expected. He candidly confessed his being overtaken with liquor, and with tears lamented it; but, alas! his spiritual strength was departed from him, so that I saw him, at different times after this, overtaken in the same snare.

The vessel was at Charlestown several months before her cargo was discharged, and a fresh one on board of her. I had an opportunity of taking notice of the place, its inhabitants, and their conduct. The people appeared to be a dissipated and thoughtless generation. The little I saw in public, and what I observed in private companies, made me conclude, that the world, and the things thereof, engrossed their whole attention. The cheapness of rum, and the heat of the climate, were strong inducements for the inhabitants to love drink; and many of them

did so to excess. I also observed a very great profligacy of manners among the poor blacks, whether they were free or slaves. However, I found there were Lots, even in this Sodom. As I made it a point of conscience to attend the public worship every Lord's day, I observed the places pretty well filled, and the people seemed to hear with attention. The only minister I heard who seemed to speak home to the consciences of his hearers was a Baptist. I attended principally at his chapel, and had reason to bless God for the agreeable seasons I enjoyed under his ministry. I nevertheless found I was not at home, and I did not enjoy that depth of communion with God, either in public or private, which I had experienced before I left Edinburgh. I longed to leave the place; and when the time came, I rejoiced at the thoughts of seeing my Christian friends in Leith, Edinburgh, and Dunbar, once more. We sailed from Charlestown in the month of February, and the vessel arrived at Leith about the middle of April. We had a very stormy passage; but our gracious Lord most mercifully preserved us. Our captain was ill most of the voyage; and what was worse, he made himself too often so, by taking strong drink. He had truly been converted to God, and for years was a burning and a shining light; but that fatal opinion, that he could not fall from grace, had been the bane of his spiritual happiness. He several times took me by the hand, and thanked me; and then said, if God spared him to return home safe, he would go to sea no more.

The company that I was obliged to mingle with at Charlestown, on account of business, was far from pleasing to me; and the want of more retirement was attended with loss to my spiritual happiness.

On my return home, when I compared the state of my mind to that which I experienced before I left Britain, I found that my soul had suffered a real declension. On my knees, and with many tears, I cried to God to restore the joy of His salvation. My mind was much affected with this thought, that I had acted the part of Jonah, and had fled from the presence of the Lord, by making the prospect of gain one of the chief inducements for me to go this voyage; and this was increased, when I reflected on the conviction, that I had so deeply felt, of giving up myself to the work of the ministry. It was then that the thoughts of preaching the Gospel returned upon me with double force.

Mr. Whitefield came to Edinburgh soon after my return from abroad; and I had the pleasure of hearing him, evening and morning, for some days. The Lord, in mercy, made the word by him a great blessing to my soul; so that I soon recovered all that peace and joy in believing which I had experienced twelve months before. My cup now ran over, and the joy of the Lord was my strength. I had now an opportunity of getting acquainted with several pious persons, to whom I was a stranger before I sailed for Carolina.

Mr. Wesley had paid several visits to Glasgow, at the kind solicitation of that good man, Dr. Gillies; but no society was formed there for several years afterwards. As a society was formed at Dunbar in the latter end of the year 1755, and at Musselborough soon after, Mr. Wesley preached at both the above places in the years 1757 and 1759; and was much pleased to see the piety and zeal which the members of each society showed, as well as the congregations that attended. I was absent from Dunbar

at the time of both his visits, and I had not the pleasure of seeing him for two years afterwards. In the year 1760 an opening was made for our preachers to visit Edinburgh and Aberdeen, with some other places in the north ; but it was not till the summer, 1761, that Mr. Wesley preached in the above cities. I came to Dunbar about the month of June, 1759. It was with great pleasure I met with my relatives and Christian friends, after an absence of near ten months. The Lord enabled me to improve the time and opportunities I now enjoyed, both to my own good, and the good of others. Now it was that I first got acquainted with my valuable friend Mr. Mather. For several years there was no regular preaching at Dunbar, only the preachers paid them a visit from Newcastle as often as they could. Mr. Mather's visit was attended with a great blessing to the society at Dunbar, as also to the society at Musselborough. I was greatly pleased, as well as profited, by his preaching and conversation. I never saw anyone before that appeared so dead to all below, and so much alive to God, as also so deeply engaged in His work. I embraced every opportunity of his company and conversation, and the more I saw and heard, the more my heart cleaved to him. I was with him at Musselborough, and stood before him when he preached out of doors, and he leaned on my shoulders, which I thought a very great honour ; although I did not admire the appearance of some who were preparing to throw dirt at him. I had not learned then what it was to go through showers of dirt, stones, and rotten eggs, which I experienced several years afterwards. From the conversation I had with Mr. Mather, I had a very great desire to visit the societies of Alnwick, New-

castle, and Sunderland. In September I set off for Berwick, and from thence to Alnwick and Newcastle. I was greatly pleased, as well as profited, by all I saw or heard, whether in public, or with private individuals. Now it was that I saw Methodism in its beauty, as it reflected its doctrine and discipline, as well as the Divine power that attended the word of God preached. My soul was greatly united to the people wherever I came; and everyone I met with showed me kindness. While I was at Newcastle, in attending the preaching one Sunday afternoon, when Mr. Thomas Lee preached out of doors, he inquired who that young man was, that stood opposite to him, dressed in blue. As soon as he knew where I lodged, he sent for me, and showed me every mark of love and brotherly kindness. He said he was going to the north, in order to visit the societies in those parts, and desired me to go with him; which I most willingly complied with. When we came to one of the country places where he was to preach, he desired me to meet the little congregation that evening. I told him, that I never attempted to preach, and begged to be excused. He then asked, if I never had prayed or exhorted in public. I told him, I had, sometimes, at our little prayer-meetings: then he replied, that I should certainly speak to the people that evening. I entreated him to excuse me: but all I said was in vain; so that I was obliged to comply. I sung and prayed, and said something; but in such confusion, that I do not remember one sentence I delivered. I was heartily glad when I had done, and told Mr. Lee that I hoped he would never ask me to speak or pray any more in public.

After my return to Dunbar, I determined I would spend some time in the north of England. While

at home, my time was principally spent in reading, meditation, and prayer. The Lord was now preparing me for that work unto which He was pleased afterwards to call me. I was assured that I grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the month of November, Mr. Shent, from Leeds, called at Dunbar, and preached several times. As I had been making up my mind for some time, I now saw my way clear to go with him to Newcastle. After staying a few days there, I went to visit Sunderland, and determined to spend some time in that place. There was something in the spirit and temper of the people that was very pleasing to me, and I soon got acquainted with some who were much devoted to God. My soul increased in the Divine life; and if ever I was sensible of deep communion with God, it was now. I greatly loved the conversation of pious old professors, as I learned more from their experience of the work of Divine grace, than all that I ever conversed with before. To spend an hour with such, was truly pleasing to me; and to this day I remember with gratitude the many useful lessons I then learned. I now saw the whole economy of Methodism in the most favourable light,—the class and band meetings, meeting of the society, body-bands, lovefeasts, &c., I saw the great utility of, and it gave me the utmost pleasure to conform to every part: the whole was calculated to promote the great end for which they were designed,—the glory of God in the salvation of souls. The preachers lodged at the house where I was, which afforded me frequent opportunities of instruction; and although it is now almost forty-four years ago, yet I call to mind, with the utmost pleasure, the salutary effects of those interviews. It is with the

most cordial satisfaction that I record the names of a Cownley, Hopper, Lowe, Rowell, Lee, Oddie, Hosmer, Olivers, and some others, whose names I do not at this time remember. I most unfeignedly thank God for the seasons I enjoyed with all of them. They have all run their race, and finished their course; and as they were all burning and shining lights in their day and generation, they are now in the garner of God, where I believe I shall soon join them, with many others, to part no more for ever!

Before I came to Sunderland, I had, at times, a discovery of the remaining evil of my heart, which at seasons made me very uneasy. In reading the oracles of God, I was clearly convinced that the grand design of the Gospel was not only to bring sinners to enjoy a sense of the Divine favour, through our Lord Jesus Christ, but also to restore them to that holiness without which no man can enjoy God in eternal glory. After I came to Sunderland, I had a discovery of this important truth, in a more distinct and ample manner. I now began to seek this great salvation, as I had never done before; and the more I sought it, the more my soul grew in grace, and in the knowledge of the adorable Saviour. It was also at this time that the thoughts of preaching began to operate with more force upon my mind. This led me to much prayer, that I might not deceive my own soul. As these thoughts occurred, I was determined never to attempt any such thing, unless God should make it as plain to me as the sun at noon-day. Thus I spent the winter, and the early part of the spring, and most sensibly felt that my soul had gained ground in the heavenly race. My one desire was to please God, and to do the will of Heaven;

and I laboured to redeem the time, in the most earnest and useful manner. I frequently strove to put away the thoughts of preaching from my mind; and the more I did so, the more would they return, and penetrate my heart.

As the spring approached, I frequently walked out into the fields; and many a precious moment have I experienced in reading and prayer, at the side of a hedge, when none but the Holy One of Israel either saw or heard me. It was in one of those seasons that I was seized in a very uncommon manner. I had such a discovery of the deplorable state of the human race, by original and actual sin, that I almost fainted away. Words cannot express the view, as well as the feelings, I at that time had, which led me to more earnest prayer, searching the Scriptures, and walking more closely with God. Some time after this, as I was one evening meeting my class, and happy in my soul, I was all on a sudden seized with such horror, as I had never known from the time I knew the pardoning love of God. As soon as the meeting was finished, I went home, and retired to private prayer; but all was darkness and painful distress. I found no intercourse with heaven, and faith and prayer seemed to have lost their wings. For five days and nights I went through such distress of soul as made sleep, and the desire of food, depart from me. I could attend to nothing but my painful feelings, and mourn and weep.

On the fifth day two friends called to see me, and we joined in prayer, and I found more liberty than I had experienced during the time of this painful distress. As soon as my friends were gone, I fell down on my knees, and continued in prayer till I went to bed. I now found a degree of sweetness,

and communion with my Lord once more; and I closed my eyes with the pleasing sensation. I awoke very early next morning, and with such a change in my feelings, that I could scarce allow myself time to dress, before I fell upon my knees to praise God; and when on my knees, had such a view of the goodness and love of God, as almost overcame every power of body and soul. Soon after this, I had such a discovery made to the eye of my mind, of the dreadful state of all the human race, (who were without God, and without hope in the world,) that my knees smote together, and every joint trembled; while these words sounded in my ears, "Whom shall I send? whom shall I send?" My heart replied, "Lord, if I can be of any use, to pluck one of these from the jaws of ruin, here I am, send me." At that moment I felt such love for the souls of my fellow-creatures, as I never had done since I knew the pardoning love of God. A variety of scriptures were now applied to my mind, part of which were the following:—"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; for the Lord shall go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rereward!" And, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." My whole heart cried out, "Who am I, O Lord, or what is my father's house, that Thou shouldest employ such a poor, ignorant creature as I am?" Then it was that these words came with power to my soul: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ; even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight."

If my cup, for some days, had been a cup of inward anguish and distress, it was now filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory ! It was similar to the overwhelming power of Divine love, which I felt on that transporting morning, when the Lord brought my soul first out of darkness into His marvellous light. The only difference was in this,—I had such a deep discovery of the ruined and deplorable state of man, and of the unsearchable riches of Christ, as I then had no conception of. Such were my feelings, that I thought I could lay down my life, if I might but be anywise instrumental of saving one soul from everlasting ruin. It did not now enter into my mind to think about a genteel provision for the work of the ministry, or of being deeply learned in polite literature, so as to acquire the applause of men ; but only how I might obtain the approbation of God, connected with the salvation of my own soul, and also of the souls of others. In short, my will was so lost in the will of God, that the whole cry of my heart was, "Thy will be done, Thy will be done."

When the overwhelming power of God in some measure subsided, I began to reason about my weakness, and unfitness in every respect for the work of the ministry ; but how kind and gracious was the Lord, in conveying with power the following scriptures to my mind !—"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper ; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the

Lord." (Isai. liv. 17.) All the above solemn transaction between God and my soul passed in the morning between three o'clock and seven, when my mind settled into a sweet and heavenly calm. Such had been my ignorance and folly, that many times I had said in my mind, "I will never attempt to take a text, or stand up to preach the Gospel, unless God shall condescend to make my call as clear as the apostle Paul's was." The Lord therefore in great mercy took this method to remove all scruples from my mind, and to make it as clear as the sun at noon-day. Who would have thought, that, after such an abundant revelation of the will of God concerning me, I ever should have feared that I had deceived myself, and that the whole was a delusion? But of this in its proper place. I now saw that all the past dealings of God, in the painful as well as the pleasing experience I had gone through, were intended to prepare my soul for this important period. When I was called down to breakfast, all the family observed the pleasing change in my countenance, but they remained strangers to the cause; only I observed, that I was delivered from my painful exercise of mind, and was now exceeding happy in the enjoyment of the love and comfortable presence of God. Indeed, if ever I lived in the suburbs of heaven, it was this day, and for several days after. On the Saturday we expected the preacher; and I could not help praying, in the simplicity of my heart, if what I had passed through was from God, that such a one might come. It was not his regular turn; but the kind providence of heaven condescended to my ignorance and weakness, in sending the very person I had prayed for. I now thought this was a token for good, and fully believed the whole I had gone

through was indeed the work of the Lord. I took the first opportunity that offered to read to him the whole of the late transaction between God and my soul. As soon as I had done it, he replied, "This may be of God, and it may not be of Him; but nothing certain can be said, or a proper judgment formed, till a trial is made." This was a wise and judicious manner of giving me his sentiments; but it cast a damp on my mind, and exposed me to painful reasonings. Nevertheless, matters were ordered so, that I went with one of the local preachers, and supplied his place on the Sabbath. I had occasionally given an exhortation before, but never ventured to take a text till this day; so that this was the first sermon I ever preached. Several of the people took me by the hand when I came down from the pulpit; but I was so ashamed, that I could not look any of them in the face. But this was not all: I had been led to think, if I really was called of God to preach, the Divine power would attend the word in a very remarkable manner, in the conviction and conversion of sinners. This arose from reading Messrs. Wesley's and Whitefield's Journals; as also in hearing Mr. Whitefield myself. I did not know the meaning of that saying, "My time is not yet." Indeed, I concluded I had been mistaken, and had deceived myself; and therefore I resolved to preach no more. In this resolution I returned from the place where I had preached to Sunderland, and was very much tempted and distressed. As soon as I came home, I retired to my room, and poured out my soul before God, most fervently beseeching Him that I might not be deceived, and thereby ruin my own soul. Those who have gone through the same fire and water will understand what I then felt.

It was strongly suggested to my mind, that if ever I attempted to preach any more, Satan would tear me limb from limb! I persevered in prayer till the sweat flowed from every pore, and till I could challenge all the powers of darkness, in the strength of the Lord, to hurt a single hair of my head.

It was about this time that I was more deeply convinced of the necessity of recovering the image of the blessed God. What by my exercise of mind about preaching, and the discovery of inbred sin, it might have been said,

“Commences now the agonizing strife,
Previous to nature’s death, and second life!”

Sometimes I thought I would preach no more; but when I refrained, I was truly miserable. Through the mercy of God, wherever I went, the people received me with pleasure, and kindly solicited my return among them. But all this did not satisfy me: as I did not see the fruit of my labours, as I expected, I was much cast down and distressed. I did not then know that I had not wisdom or grace sufficient to bear any remarkable success in my preaching. I was enabled, however, to go on my way, if not at all times rejoicing, yet with a pleasing hope I should yet see better days. Early in the spring, 1761, another local preacher with myself resolved to spend the ensuing summer in breaking up fresh ground: a blessing attended our labours, and we were encouraged to go on in the work of the Lord. In the beginning of June, Mr. Wesley being on his return from Scotland, and as I never had seen him, I was desirous to give him the meeting before he came to Sunderland. Accordingly, five or six friends set off from Sunderland, and being informed that Mr. Wesley was to preach at Morpeth at one

o'clock, we set forward; but when we came to Morpeth, we found he had preached at twelve instead of one o'clock. We put up our horses, and hastened to the market-place, where he was giving out the last hymn. We were not too late, however, for the Divine blessing. As soon as I came near to hear the words of the hymn, I was so struck with the presence of God, that if I had not leaned on a friend's arm, I should have fallen to the ground. The words of the hymn were,

"Now, even now, the Saviour stands,
All day long He spreads His hands."

As I had read all Mr. Wesley's Works, and in particular his Journals, I had formed a very high opinion of him; and the moment I distinctly saw him, and heard his voice, such a crowd of ideas rushed upon my mind, as words cannot express. The union of soul I then felt with him was indescribable.

I had long considered Mr. John Wesley as the father of the Methodists, under God. If Mr. Whitefield was rendered such a blessing to my soul, in my first acquaintance with God, and the things of eternity, I had since learned that Mr. Wesley had been a father to him and others, who afterwards had been burning and shining lights in their day and generation. I could not help saying in my mind, "And is this the man who has braved the winter storm and summer's sun, and run to and fro throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and has crossed the Atlantic Ocean, to bring poor wretched sinners to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?" I looked at him with a degree of astonishment, and from my very soul could bless God that He had so highly favoured

me, as to let me see this eminent servant of the King of kings and Lord of lords ! It was now that the foundation of that union was laid, which remained inviolate for thirty-one years, to the time he was called to his great and eternal reward ! I have a thousand times over blessed the God of heaven that ever I saw his face, or heard his voice ; and I shall continue to do so while life remains, and I hope to spend a glorious eternity with him.

As soon as the singing and prayer were concluded, I went to the friend's house where Mr. Wesley was to dine. We had the pleasure of his conversation for some little time, and after dinner rode on to Placey : he preached there at five o'clock, and then rode on to Newcastle. Mr. Wesley's company and conversation by the way made this one of the most pleasant rides that I ever had known. In the course of a few days, Mr. Wesley came to Sunderland, and I had the pleasure of hearing him, morning and evening, while he was there. His preaching was attended with a peculiar blessing to my soul, in giving me a more clear conception of purity of heart, and the way to obtain it, by faith alone ; but when he read some letters in the society, giving an account of the great work of God in London, and some other places, I was so deeply affected with a sense of inbred sin, that I was almost overwhelmed by it. For several years I had seen, and at seasons deeply felt, the need of purity of heart ; but now my soul was pierced with such keen convictions, as gave me no rest, night or day. In short, my heart was so laid open, and so completely dissected by the word and Spirit of God, that I was ready to cast away my confidence, seeing it so desperately wicked.

I wanted to open my mind to Mr. Wesley ; but

the power of temptation shut my mouth, so that I could neither inform him of what I intended respecting my call to preach, nor the present experience of my soul. The Lord in great mercy preserved me from casting away my shield, and sinking in the deep waters, which at times appeared ready to swallow me up. However, I was not suffered to sink under the pressure of this burden. There were a few that were earnestly seeking the great salvation, deliverance from inbred sin; and with them I associated. None of them appeared to me to labour under such deep distress, nor had such deep discoveries of the evils of their heart, as I laboured under. From what I heard of their experience, I was afraid to mention the whole of my feelings, lest I should stumble any of them. The Lord knew what He was preparing me for, and therefore He was pleased to give me to drink deeper of the painful cup, that I might know how to comfort and encourage others. I was also at this time strongly tempted to preach no more, till God had purified my heart, and brought me into this glorious liberty. When I gave way to this temptation, I was so much the more unhappy; and therefore I still continued to preach, and the Lord was pleased to bless my labours. It was about this time that I had an opportunity of conversing with one who professed to love the Lord with all her heart, soul, mind, and strength. Her conversation was much blessed to my soul, and I saw the way of deliverance more clearly than I had done before.

After labouring as in the fire, from the month of June to September, the Lord gave me such a discovery of His love as I never had known before. I was meeting with a few Christian friends, who were

all athirst for entire holiness, and after several had prayed, I also called on the name of the "Deliverer that came out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob." While these words were pronounced with my heart and lips, "Are we not, O Lord, the purchase of Thy blood? let us then be redeemed from all iniquity," in a moment the power of God so descended upon my soul, that I could pray no more. It was

"That speechless awe which dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love!"

I had many times experienced the power of redeeming love, and in such a manner as I scarce knew whether in the body or not. But this manifestation of the presence of my adorable Lord and Saviour was such as I never had witnessed before, and no words of mine can properly describe it. I can only say "that my soul was filled with serene peace unutterable, and full of glory." It was such a heaven opened in my heart as I never expected to experience on this side eternity. The language of my heart every moment was, "O, what has Jesus done for me! O, what has Jesus done for me!" Soon after, some of the friends present asked, if I had received the blessing of purity of heart. I replied, "I cannot tell what the Lord hath done for me; but this I can say, I never felt such a change, through all the powers of my soul, as I now feel!" When we parted, I left them all in tears; but most were tears of joy. Yet, as I had no particular scripture applied, I durst not say that the blood of Christ had cleansed me from all sin. I longed to retire into private, and to pour out my whole heart and soul to my blessed Deliverer! O, what an evening did it

experience! The windows of heaven were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness, and great was my glorying in God my Saviour.

When the overwhelming power of Divine love began to subside a little, and I had no more such manifestations as I had had the first evening of my great deliverance, Satan began to suggest I had not received purity of heart. So far the tempter would allow, that I had received a very great blessing; but not deliverance from inbred sin. Having none to converse with who were established in that glorious liberty, and therefore a stranger to Satan's devices, I was ready to conclude I might be indeed mistaken. By these subtle suggestions, I was led into hurtful reasonings, and this made way for doubts concerning the glorious work which God had wrought in my soul. However, I still enjoyed liberty, and I felt nothing contrary to love arise in my heart. When I opened my mind to one of the preachers, and told him a little of my experience, he asked me if I thought God had delivered me from the remains of the carnal mind. I replied, "I cannot tell, only I enjoy such a liberty as I never did enjoy since I have known the pardoning love of God." He encouraged me to go forward, and to expect the witness of what the Lord had done for me.

I saw my great business was to keep close to God, and continue my meetings with those few who wished to be all devoted to the Lord Jesus.

In the beginning of October I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and informed him of what had passed in my soul; as also what I had gone through for near two years, concerning my call to preach. He soon answered my letter, and closed it with these words, "You will never get free of all those evil reasonings,

till you give yourself wholly up to the work of God!" Soon after this I went up to London, and embraced the first opportunity of waiting upon Mr. Wesley: he spoke to me as a father to a son, and advised me to decline all thoughts of temporal concerns, and to go into a Circuit. The importance of the work appeared to be such as made me tremble. He desired me to consider the conversation, and call upon him again. In the mean time, I embraced every opportunity of meeting with those whom I observed were all in earnest for deliverance from inbred sin. The kind providence of God soon brought me acquainted with some of the most excellent of the earth, several of whom had been brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. With such I constantly associated, and their prayers and conversation were a great blessing to my soul. The Lord removed all my doubts and evil reasonings, and by His grace I knew I loved the Lord my God with all my soul, mind, and strength. In short, I was not ashamed to declare, that I assuredly knew, that the Lord Jesus had purified my heart by faith in His blood, and that I felt nothing contrary to the pure love of God. What seasons of refreshment did I find in the select band, and other private meetings at this time! My soul was like a watered garden from day to day, and my cup was running over. I no longer felt reluctance to go out as a poor despised Methodist preacher; whereas, before this period, I really thought I could have chosen death as soon. I therefore embraced the opportunity of waiting upon Mr. Wesley again, and told him I was willing to labour where he thought proper. He told me, "that Mr. Murlin, who was then in the Sussex Circuit, was going down to Norwich, and that I should

go and supply his place;" and I accordingly went.

Sevenoaks, in Kent, was the first place I preached at. I had paid a very particular attention to the manner of Mr. Wesley, as also of Mr. Maxfield, when preaching in London. I took notice of the pointed and close applications they made to the consciences of the people. As I had them for a pattern, I endeavoured to tread in their steps. I enforced, as well as I could, a free, full, and present salvation. The Lord soon set to His seal, so that some were stirred up to expect pardon, and others deliverance from the remains of the carnal mind. The goodness of God was manifested in a peculiar manner, with respect to my own soul; for I had not been a week in the Circuit, before I had such a discovery of my call to preach, as confirmed all my former experience. The preaching had not been above three years in this little Circuit, and one preacher supplied the whole. I therefore attended to the discipline of the societies, as well as preaching to them; and as all the societies were but small, I always met them, by speaking to every member after I had done preaching. This I did the first time I went round the Circuit; and I soon saw the salutary effects thereof. I knew the state of every member: and this enabled me to address them in public and private accordingly. It pleased God first to visit some in Sevenoaks with a sense of pardon, as also of the virtue of the all-cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. When I mentioned this as I went round the Circuit, the flame broke out in such a manner as was never seen or felt among them before.

At my third or fourth visit, upwards of twenty found peace with God, and several others were en-

abled to testify that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin. Now it was that I saw the arm of the Lord made bare, and the fruit of my labours, when God had prepared my soul, by many temptations and many blessings, to bear the same. O the wisdom and goodness of God in His dealings with His creatures !

Every day some one or another was brought to the knowledge of God ; others filled with His pure love, and several awakened to a sense of their lost and undone state.

In one of those meetings at Ewehurst Cross, it pleased God to visit Mr. Richardson, who was then curate of the parish. A few months after, he came to London, and laboured as a clergyman in connexion with Mr. Wesley, and was a burning and a shining light, till called to his eternal reward. That memorable day, when the Lord visited Mr. Richardson's soul, was such a one as I had never seen. From twelve to twenty persons in the two little societies of Northiam and Ewehurst were brought to the knowledge of God. I was engaged almost the whole of the day in praying and speaking to the people. I was so filled with the love of God, that I scarcely slept the whole night ; and yet I got up in the morning as a giant refreshed with wine.

I went to the Conference held at Leeds in July, 1762, where I was appointed to the Sheffield Circuit, and had for my companions John Nelson, William Ingill, and James Clough. The Sheffield Circuit at that time extended to Leicester on the south, and beyond Barnsley in the north. The work of the Lord prospered, but particularly in Sheffield and Rotherham. Many were added to the society, and several brought to know the justifying and sanctify-

ing influences of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, with several other places, partook of the revival.

At the next Conference, in London, the Fund for the old preachers was first set on foot. I was appointed to labour the ensuing year, 1763, in the Devonshire Circuit, which took in Somerset as well as Devon. My fellow-labourers were Nicholas Manners and William Menithorp. We soon began to see some fruit of our labour. Except Tiverton and Collumpton, the societies were but small, as were the congregations also. We preached a free, full, and present salvation. In some places we saw the fruit of our labours; but not without opposition from those that were without, as well as others that were within. Where we introduced preaching, we had a great deal of tumult and confusion, and also in some of the old societies, particularly in the city of Exeter. However, in most of the societies there was an increase of number; in others, many were savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We had a very remarkable work in the little society of Northmoulton, both for grace and number. The doctrine, and the witnesses of purity of heart, gave much offence to a well-meaning man, who was a school-master and local preacher. He gave way to a very improper spirit, which hurt the work, and grieved the spirits of many, as well as myself. How much hurt will one jarring string cause in a society, and sometimes in a Circuit! There was one thing which had an unhappy effect on the minds of some in that society, and in other societies of the Circuit. Mr. Menithorp was obliged to leave the Circuit; the preacher who came in his place neither understood

nor loved the Methodist doctrines or discipline, and therefore the discontented found a kind of refuge in him; which hurt the work in several places, and greatly pained my mind. Nevertheless, we had such a revival of the work of God as had not been known for years.

In 1764 the Conference was in Bristol, and I was appointed assistant preacher for Cornwall. I had no sooner given my consent, than my heart was filled with the Divine Presence, and a conviction that I should see such a year as I had never done since I was an itinerant preacher. All the time I remained in Bristol, before I set out for my Circuit, I enjoyed such communion with God as I had not done in all the former part of the Conference. In this happy frame of mind I continued till I reached Redruth. I had little or no acquaintance with those who were to be my fellow-labourers, except two of them; one of whom I could truly depend on, as a man whose soul was wholly in the work of God. As soon as I had time to converse a little with our friends, I found that brother Brammah and his wife had not been idle the few days they had been in Redruth before me. The first evening I preached, the Lord was pleased to give me an earnest of what He was about to do in this town, as well as in all the Circuit. Ten or twelve were awakened under that sermon.

I looked upon this as a token for good, and I believed we should see glorious days of the Son of man. The whole county was one Circuit; but we were obliged to divide it into two: three preachers supplied the west, and three the eastern part. My companions in the west were Messrs. Brammah and Stevens: those in the east were Messrs. Oldham,

Darney, and Whitehead, who were truly alive to God, and they were blessed to the people wherever they preached. Brother Whitehead was only come out, at this Conference, on trial. Brother Darney had preached for years: he had been eccentric in his manner of labouring in the Connexion, and Mr. Wesley, with my brethren, thought I might be able to cure him. For a season he behaved pretty well, and was ready to be advised; but he relapsed into his former conduct, and advanced opinions in public contrary to the Methodist doctrine and discipline; so that we were obliged to call in a young man to labour in his place, and dismiss him from the Circuit, and that by Mr. Wesley's express approbation. The greatest hurt he did was in the society at Plymouth-Dock, where he nearly divided the people. My other fellow-labourers were steady, and alive to God, and much blessed in their labours. The work of God more or less prospered in every society in the county. In two or three months hundreds were added to the societies in the west, and many savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; many backsliders were restored, and a most wonderful change took place in every parish where the Gospel was preached. Most of the country villages were like Eden, and as the garden of the Lord! It was not uncommon for ten or twenty to find peace with God in one day, or at one sermon or lovefeast, in many places.

After preaching two or three nights in Redruth, I joined about forty, young and old, to the society; and many of them had found a clear sense of the love of God previous to their becoming members. Indeed the Spirit was poured out from on high, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour.

Before I left the country, we had joined near a thousand to the different societies, most of whom were joined to the Lord in one spirit; and some hundreds were enabled to love God with all their hearts. Such a work of Divine grace I had never been witness to before; but these were only drops before the shower, when compared with the number of young persons who were deeply wrought upon, and some children also.

When the time drew near to leave the Circuit, my feelings were such as words cannot describe. The parting was deeply affecting, and in particular with my Redruth friends, who wept and mourned, as one for his first-born. Nine out of ten of those friends are gone to their eternal reward; and I hope to meet them

“ On yonder happy plains,
Where love in endless triumph reigns.”

The Conference was this year, 1765, held at Manchester, for the first time. The ride was long, and the weather extremely hot, which afflicted me and my companions not a little. The heat was very great during the Conference, so that I was seized with fever, which confined me eight weeks at Portwood-hall, near Stockport. Mr. and Mrs. Mayer, with their kind son, paid all the attention to me in their power. My life was in great danger; but, by the blessing of God and the judicious treatment of the apothecary, the fever took a favourable turn, and I began to recover.

During my affliction, my hope was full of a glorious immortality, and I felt a desire to depart and be with Christ, which appeared to me to be far better than to live any longer on earth. The Lord, however, saw fit to protract my life; and as soon as I was

able to travel, I set out for my Circuit. I was appointed to spend part of the year in the Newcastle, and part in the Dales, Circuit.

The good air of the north had a salutary effect on my health ; so that in a few weeks I was able to go through my accustomed labour. My fellow-labourers were Messrs. Robertshaw and Ellis : they were worthy, steady, and useful men. We laboured in love, and had some degree of prosperity in the Circuit ; but not equal to what I had seen in Cornwall.

At the next Conference, held at Leeds, I was stationed for the Epworth Circuit. I had for my companions Messrs. Brammah and Harrison. I was remarkably well in my health when I came into the Circuit ; but I had not been above two months in it, when I was seized with the fever and ague. The disorder hung about me all the ensuing year, so that my labours were rendered a burden to me. Nevertheless, the work of the Lord revived, and we saw the fruits of our labours among the people.

I went to the Conference held in London, 1767. Our friends in the Epworth Circuit having written to Mr. Wesley for me to remain with them another year, he complied with their request. My journey to London, and back to Epworth, was useful to my health ; so that I had no return of my ague the ensuing year. I had abundant reason also to bless the Lord, that I saw more fruit of my labours the second year, than I had done the first. My fellow-labourers were earnest and useful men ; and we went on hand in hand in love, and the blessing of the Lord attended our steps.

The following Conference was held at Bristol, where I was appointed to labour among my friends in the west of Cornwall once more. Mr. Wesley

visited Cornwall this autumn, and his visit was rendered a blessing to many. A peculiar circumstance took place this year, which I cannot pass over in silence. Among the young people who were brought to the knowledge of God when I was in Cornwall before, there was a young woman in St. Ives, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, amiable for her years, both in sense, person, and piety: she then lived with an old lady, a relation, whose fortune she would have possessed, had she survived her. When the young woman heard I was appointed to Cornwall again, she said, "Mr. Rankin is come to preach my funeral sermon;" and so it happened; but she was taken from the evil to come. Having formed a connexion with a young gentleman who was a stranger to vital religion, she was so sensible of the snare that lay before her, that she several times told me, she believed the Lord would prevent their marriage. She had suffered loss in her soul on this account; but the Lord in mercy gave her repentance before she was seized by the illness which terminated in her death. I believe I shall meet her spirit in heaven. I mention the above to show the danger which pious young persons are in from forming connexions with those who do not walk in the paths that lead to glory.

When I had gone round the Circuit, I found cause for mourning over several, who had once run well, but who had turned aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. I determined to do all in my power to call the wanderers back. My fellow-labourers were zealous, and alive to the Lord; and we saw some fruit by a little revival in some places. Some few that were eminently useful, four years ago, had suffered loss; but it pleased God to stir them

up once more. Upon the whole, we had a pleasant and profitable year; but not to be compared with the former.

The Conference for 1769 was held in Leeds. I was stationed for the London and Sussex Circuits. Near the latter end of March I set off from the city to meet Mr. Wesley at Birmingham, in order to accompany him in his tour through the kingdom. Mr. Helton went with him also. Mr. Wesley's plan and design were, if, in any place which he visited, there was any particular Divine influence upon the congregation or society, to leave one of us there for a few days, and then we were to meet him again at a place appointed.

Mr. Wesley preached in a variety of places; but nothing very particular took place till we reached Manchester. Here there was the appearance of a revival among the people, and Mr. Wesley left me for a few days that I might endeavour to promote it. I found it a time to be remembered. I had not experienced such a season since I left London. The power and presence of God were among the people in a very wonderful manner. I afterwards met Mr. Wesley at Bolton, on his way to Glasgow. We had long and tiresome rides, and slept several times at inns by the way. Mr. Wesley left me to spend a few days at Glasgow, after he had gone for Edinburgh; and I hope my labours among the people were not in vain. After I had done preaching, and met the society on the Sunday evening, ten or twelve came to speak to me, and to request they might be admitted into the society. On my way to meet Mr. Wesley at Perth, my mare fell with me, and cut her knees so much, that I was obliged to go to Edinburgh. "What I do, thou knowest not now, but

thou shalt know hereafter!" This accident made me visit Dunbar sixteen or eighteen days sooner than I should have done; where, to my great surprise, I found my mother on her death-bed. I attended her in her last moments; and I sincerely hope I shall meet her in that day when the Lord maketh up His jewels. She had always been a tender and indulgent parent to me; and her best interests, present and eternal, always lay near my heart. I could not help admiring the hand of Providence that had arrested me on my journey, by the misfortune which befell my mare, that I might once more see my mother before she died. Near the time of my mother's death, one of the most amiable members of the society died also. She was a sensible and pious woman: I preached a funeral sermon both for her and my mother.

Mr. Wesley soon came to Dunbar; and my much-esteemed friend Dr. Hamilton did all in his power to make his visit agreeable. Mr. Wesley desired me to spend a week or two more at Dunbar, and then to follow him into England, and I afterwards joined him at Leeds. Mr. Helton was left behind in the north, as he could not bear the long journeys.

The Conference was in London in 1770; and after it was concluded, Mr. Wesley expressed a desire for me to accompany him to the west of England. We had many refreshing seasons in different places; but we had one in Redruth that exceeded them all. Here the windows of heaven were, as it were, opened, and the skies poured down righteousness. I believe there was not a dry eye in the whole congregation. I do not remember that we had such a remarkable season in all our journey; although we had many displays of the power and love of God.

Mr. Wesley returned by Bristol; and after his full time was spent in that city, and the places adjacent, he set off for Portsmouth, and I returned to London with Mrs. Wesley, where I remained for the rest of the year.

In the latter end of October the account arrived of the death of that venerable servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. Mr. Wesley preached his funeral sermon at Tottenham-Court chapel, on the Sunday morning, and at the Tabernacle in the evening. It was one of the most awful and solemn sights which I ever beheld. The man I greatly loved was now gone to his eternal reward; and he who preached his funeral sermon is also now gone, and has joined him, and the whole assembly and church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven. A little while, and we shall all meet, to part no more for ever. Of all the men I ever knew, the above two eminent servants of God claimed my deepest regard and warmest affection.

When the time of the Conference drew near, I found a desire to spend a little more of my life with my friends in Cornwall: this desire met with Mr. Wesley's entire approbation; so that at the Conference in Bristol, 1771, I was stationed for the west once more. I did not, however, see the days which I had formerly seen in those parts; and I could only pray, "Lord, let Thy kingdom come." I could truly appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that the prosperity of His kingdom was more to me than the whole world; yea, than life itself. I continued to labour till the Conference drew near, and then went, with some of my companions in the vineyard of my Lord, to Leeds, where it was, according to rotation, held. Here I met with Mr. Webb, who had lately arrived from America. Mr. Wesley had been dissatisfied

with the conduct of those who superintended the rising work there; and while I was in London he had frequently mentioned this to me. I had made it matter of much prayer, and it appeared to me that the way was opening for me to go. When the work in America came before the Conference, Mr. Wesley determined to appoint me superintendent of the whole; and I chose my much-esteemed friend and brother Shadford to accompany me to that continent. I had proved his uprightness, piety, and usefulness in several Circuits, where he had laboured with me, and I knew I could depend upon him. It was settled that we should sail in the spring, and in the mean time, that I should labour in the York Circuit. I went accordingly, and remained in those parts from the Conference till about the latter end of March. During the time I spent in this Circuit, I considered deeply and with much prayer the importance of the work which lay before me. It had dwelt upon my mind, more or less, for some years; and the nearer the period arrived, the greater it appeared to me. The thoughts of leaving Mr. Wesley, as well as my brethren, whose counsel and advice were always at hand, and ready on every trying occasion, was no small exercise to my mind. I was about to bid adieu to my relatives, and to one whom I loved as my own soul, and who afterwards was my partner in life for nineteen years; but the consideration of the work of God, and the prosperity of Zion, swallowed up every other concern. I rode to Birmingham to receive my last instructions from Mr. Wesley. The interview was pleasing and affecting, as well as instructive, which I hope to remember to my latest breath. I went from Birmingham to London, where I spent a few days, and prepared some little matters

for my voyage. After taking a solemn and affectionate leave of my friends in London, I went on for Bristol, from whence the ship was to sail for Philadelphia. I found my much-esteemed friend Mr. Pawson, with Mr. Allen, at Bristol, who laid themselves out to make everything easy and comfortable to us during our voyage. Mr. and Mrs. Webb had taken care to arrange all things respecting our provisions; and my business was to take care of what books and clothes we should want for our future use and accommodation. For what remains, and of the five years I spent abroad, till my return to London, in the beginning of June, 1778, I refer the reader to my journal during that period.

An Extract of Mr. Rankin's Journal, during the space of near five Years' Residence in North America; with some cursory Remarks on the Natural History of the Country.

ON Good Friday, April the 9th, 1773, I embarked on board the "Sally," Captain Young, commander, bound from Bristol to Philadelphia. My fellow-passengers were, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Messrs. Shadford, Yerbury, and Rowbotham. Besides the ship's company, we had several steerage passengers and indented servants. The wind was fair from Pill, and soon brought us down to the Isle of Lundy, where our pilot left us.

Saturday, 10th.—The wind favoured us, so that we made good way down the Bristol Channel. All the passengers were extremely sick. We began, however, to have morning and evening prayers in the cabin, desiring all who possibly could to attend; and

the Lord favoured us with His blessing. Sunday and Monday, the wind blowing fresh from the north-west, we soon got clear of the land; but all the passengers continued to be more or less sick, so that we could not observe that regularity in Divine worship which we desired.

Tuesday, 13th.—We spent some time this morning in exhortation as well as prayer, and had most of the sailors and steerage passengers present. The Lord was in the midst of us, and attended our meeting with power from on high. Wednesday and Thursday, the wind blew very hard, and the sea ran high, the ship rolled much, which made it very uneasy to most of the passengers, and deprived them of sleep. We called upon the Lord, and found Him a very present help in time of need.

Friday, 16th.—The wind shifted about to the north, and blew a pleasant gale. The ship glided sweetly along, and kept her proper course. We now settled our plan how we should divide our time in future. In the morning before breakfast we had public prayer, for all the passengers and ship's company. At twelve o'clock we spent half an hour in singing and prayer among ourselves. At six o'clock in the evening we did the same; and at eight we had all on board the ship to attend the evening service. This practice we were enabled to continue as long as we were on our passage to America.

Sunday, 18th.—The weather was pleasant, and we had the cabin full at morning prayer. Captain Webb added a word of exhortation, and it was attended with the Divine blessing. At eleven o'clock Mr. Shadford preached on the quarter-deck. Passengers and sailors paid the deepest attention; and surely it will not all be as water spilt on the ground.

At seven o'clock we concluded the Lord's day with exhortation, singing, and prayer ; and I found much liberty and enlargement of heart. We were led out in earnest prayer for our friends and Christian breth'ren in England, as also that God would open a great and an effectual door for the spreading of His Gospel among those to whom His mercy and providence were now sending us. Indeed, we felt the gracious influence of the Divine presence so amongst us, that we could scarcely conclude. The Lord did indeed open the windows of heaven, and the skies poured down righteousness.

Sunday, 25th.—The wind continued to blow fresh at north-west all this day, so that we made a good stretch to the west-south-west. After spending some time in reading and prayer, with profit and pleasure, I preached to all who could attend ; and some felt the power of the word to alarm and quicken their dead souls. Mr. Webb gave an exhortation at six o'clock, and we concluded the day with praise and mutual prayer. Upon the whole, this day was spent in an agreeable manner. Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever ! Monday and Tuesday, the wind was fair, and it blew a pleasant gale ; which enabled us to proceed a good way westward. We continued our usual exercises, morning, noon, and night, to all who could attend.

Saturday, May 1st.—We are now come more than half way towards Philadelphia. All on board are well, and no accident of importance has befallen any one. The praise and glory we will ascribe unto Thee, O Thou Fountain of all happiness, and God of all consolation ! My soul this day longed for more close and deep fellowship with God, and breathed her wishes to the skies.

Monday, 10th.—The wind was rather contrary all last night as well as to-day, so that we advanced but slowly on our way : the weather, however, was pleasant, which made our sleep and time more agreeable. Our public and private devotions were attended with a Divine blessing this day. I found occasion for all the grace bestowed, to bear with the peevishness of some, and the ignorance of others. It is a great thing to be enabled at all times to speak the truth in love, so as to do good, and to have the approbation of God and our own hearts. To do and suffer the will of God contains more of Christianity than I have sometimes been aware of.

Tuesday, 11th.—I was much exercised with a violent headache all this day, as also divers inward temptations. May I ever be enabled to say, "Welcome cross, as well as crown!"

Wednesday and Thursday, the weather continued pleasant, and the wind a little more favourable. I was refreshed with rest, but more abundantly so by the presence of God, both in public and private.

"His presence makes our paradise,
And where He is, is heaven."

Sunday, 16th.—Early this morning it began to blow hard at south-west. The motion of the ship made several of my fellow-passengers sick. After our morning reading and prayer, I preached from Rom. vi. 23. I found a measure of freedom ; but still preaching on board a ship is rather uncomfortable. At six o'clock in the evening, brother Webb closed the day with exhortation and prayer. The word seemed to lay hold on some of their hearts, and they began to show it by their tears. May the God of love have mercy upon their souls ! About ten

days ago, several of the indented servants were taken ill of a fever, and were for some time delirious. Having some medicines on board, I treated them as Dr. Tissot prescribes, in his "Advice to the People;" and it pleased God that they all soon recovered. I attended them with food, as well as medicine; and now that they were better, and able to attend Divine service, I discovered that my poor labours had not been in vain in the Lord.

Friday, 21st.—It is just six weeks since we sailed from Pill, and so far the Lord hath conducted us. "The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock of my salvation."

Monday, 31st.—We sounded this evening, and for the first time found ground, at near fifty fathoms. We concluded the day with hearty prayer and praise to God for all His favours towards us.

Tuesday, June 1st.—We were enabled to lie mostly west all last night, and we were favoured with a fine breeze, so that we advanced swiftly towards the land. Between eight and nine in the morning, we saw it, and soon after a pilot-boat, which came alongside, and put a pilot on board a little after dinner. By the wind we were driven to the leeward of Cape May, on the Jersey shore. We beat up to the windward all the afternoon, in order to open the way, that we might have a fair wind up the Delaware river. As we drew nearer the shore, the pleasing view of the green trees, and many of them towering high above the rest, made the prospect delightful. None can conceive, but those who have experienced it, the sensations that arise in the breast on seeing the land, after some weeks of viewing nothing but the sea and open firmament. I believe we all felt grateful to the God of all our mercies, and

most earnestly prayed that He would go with us to a strange land and among a strange people. The prospect was charming and delightfully pleasant on both sides of the river. The spreading trees, and the great variety of shades, heightened the scene; with the addition now and then of a plantation, with large orchards of peach and apple trees, as also large fields of Indian corn. Indeed, I never beheld such a lovely prospect in any part of my life before. We came to anchor late in the evening, opposite Chester, about sixteen miles below Philadelphia, after a run of above one hundred miles from six in the morning. I felt but poorly most of the day, for want of rest the last night, occasioned by my tooth-ache returning with redoubled violence. I was enabled to look to God, and in some degree to live to Him. My cry was to be wholly devoted to Him who had done so much for my soul, and that the remainder of my days might be wholly consecrated to His glory.

Friday and Saturday, I was employed in getting our trunks and boxes on shore. I preached on Friday evening for the first time, and afterwards met the leaders of classes and bands. Upon the whole, I have reason to be thankful for what of the Divine presence I have felt this day, as well as in His service this evening. Saturday evening, Mr. Shadford gave a warm exhortation to all who attended. I found the want of more retirement since I came on shore. My soul cannot live without it.

As I am now, by the providence of God, called to labour for a season on this continent, do Thou, O Holy One of Israel, stand by Thy weak and ignorant servant! Show Thyself glorious in power, and in Divine majesty. Let Thine arm be made bare, and stretched out to save, so that wonders and signs may

be done in the name of the holy child Jesus. From what I see and hear, and so far as I can judge, if my brethren who first came over had been more attentive to our discipline, there would have been, by this time, a more glorious work in many places of this continent. Their lovefeasts, and meetings of society, were laid open to all their particular friends; so that their number did not increase, and the minds of our best friends were thereby hurt.

Sunday, 13th.—Brother Asbury preached in the morning at seven o'clock, from Ruth ii. 4. During the sermon I was led to reflect on the motives which induced me to leave my native land, and Christian friends and brethren, and cross the Atlantic ocean, to a land and people unknown. I could appeal to God, with the utmost sincerity of heart, I had only one thing in view, His glory, the salvation of souls, connected with my own. In a moment the cloud broke, and the power of God rested upon my soul, and every gloom fled away, as morning shades before the rising sun. I had then faith to believe, that I should see His glory, as I had seen it in the sanctuary. At six o'clock in the afternoon I preached from Judges iii. 20. After preaching, I met the society. The Lord was in the midst, as a flame of fire among dry stubble. Great was our rejoicing in the God of our salvation. Blessed be God, sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning! This has indeed been a day of the Son of man, both to my own soul, and the souls of many others. The praise, O Lord, will I ascribe unto Thee!

Monday, 14th.—Brother Asbury preached at five o'clock in the morning, and I preached in the evening. The Lord was in the word, and crowned it with His Divine blessing. I spoke my mind freely

and fully to the society, and I trust not in vain. One thing struck me a good deal this day. I was really surprised at the extravagance of dress which I beheld, and in particular among the women. I very well remember I observed to a friend, that "if God had a love for the inhabitants of this city, He would surely send some sore chastisement upon them." Little did I think then of the unhappy war that followed, in the calamities of which the people of New York had a large share. Indeed, the pride of dress, and luxury of every kind, had risen to a great height. I could not help taking notice of it when I met the society, and earnestly entreated them not to conform to this world.

Monday and Tuesday, I had an opportunity of conversing with many of the members of the society in private; and had reason to bless God, that I found several deeply awakened to a sense of inbred sin, and earnestly seeking entire deliverance from the last remains thereof. Others, who had been resting in good desires, were cut to the heart, and cried out with tears, "What shall I do to be saved?" Some also I found, who were newly awakened, and desired to be admitted into the society.

Sunday, July 4th.—I preached in the morning at seven. Blessed be God, I found freedom and tenderness, to apply the word in a particular manner to those who were groaning for pardon of sin and for purity of heart. Brother Asbury preached in the evening a home Methodist sermon, and the Lord crowned it with a Divine blessing. We concluded the day with a general lovefeast. The people spoke with life and Divine liberty, and in particular some of the blacks. The Lord was present indeed, and the shout of the King of Glory was heard in the camp of Israel.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, we had our first little Conference. There were present seven preachers, besides brothers Boardman and Pilmore, who were to return to England. The amount of all the members in the different societies did not exceed one thousand one hundred and sixty. From the wonderful accounts I had heard in England, and during our passage, I was led to think there must be some thousands awakened, and joined as members of our societies; but I was now convinced of the real truth. Some of the above number, I also found afterwards, were not closely united to us. Indeed, our discipline was not properly attended to, except at Philadelphia and New York; and even in those places it was upon the decline. Nevertheless, from the accounts I heard, there was a real foundation laid of doing much good, and we hoped to see greater things than these. The preachers were stationed in the best manner we could, and we parted in love; and also with a full resolution to spread genuine Methodism, in public and private, with all our might. It was thought proper that I should spend a little more time at New York, and brother Shadford at Philadelphia.

For some days past I have felt the Redeemer's presence in a most sensible manner; but still I want more life, light, and love: I want to be entirely devoted to God, and to walk before Him as Enoch and Abraham did.

Saturday, I met the children at four, the band-leaders a little after seven, and the bands at eight o'clock in the evening. The presence of the Lord was in the midst; but I wanted to see more freedom and openness among the people: when this should be the case, I hoped we should have a greater blessing.

Sunday, 15th.—Mr. Pilmore preached in the morning, and I supplied the evening. I met the society afterwards, and spoke my mind plainly of some things which tended to hinder the work of God and in which I sincerely desired to see an amendment. If love and harmony do not prevail among leaders and people, it is impossible for the work to prosper among them. A party spirit has greatly hindered the work of God in this city: I long to see it torn up by the very roots.

Sunday, 29th.—I preached at the usual hours, morning and evening, and afterwards met the society. In some good degree, this has been a Sabbath of rest to my soul. Blessed for ever be the name of the Lord for all His mercies. I long to be holy in life, and in all manner of conversation. I was assisted by the labours of brother Pilmore the ensuing week; having returned from a journey in the country. He preached with more life and Divine power this week than he has done since I landed at Philadelphia. Blessed be God that he is returning to that simplicity of spirit that made him so useful when he first came over to America. Whatever we lose, let us never lose that simplicity which is attended with life, light, and love, and with power from on high. If ever a Methodist preacher loses this temper of mind, the glory is departed from him. I went through some close inward exercises this week; but out of all the Lord delivered me.

Sunday, September 12th.—Brother Pilmore and I divided the labours of the day. The rainy weather made our congregations thin; but those who did attend found it good to be there. For some days past my soul has intensely breathed after full conformity to the blessed God. I can truly say, "As

the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so my heart panteth after the living God." Thou that knowest all things knowest that I desire to love Thee with all my soul, mind, and strength. Hasten, Lord, the moment when there shall be nothing in my soul but Thy pure love alone.

Sunday, 26th.—I preached in the morning at seven, and in the evening at the usual time. I found more liberty in the morning than I expected. After breakfast I went to St. Paul's, as I always have done, to public worship. After service was over, I retired to my room to wrestle with God in private prayer. My soul for several hours was indeed in the garden. I did indeed drink a little of that cup. Towards evening I felt a degree of liberty of soul, and the word was attended with some power from on high. O, how I long to see the work of God break out on the right hand and on the left! "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right arm forget its cunning," and let me be bereaved of my only joy!

Monday, October 4th.—I began visiting all the classes, previous to my leaving New York for a season. Upon the whole, I had reason to be thankful, and to bless God for what He had done for many of their souls. Brother Boardman divided the labours of this week with me; which, indeed, was a blessing to the people, as well as to my poor tried mind and feeble body.

Sunday, 10th.—Brother Boardman preached this morning, and I in the evening. I found a measure of liberty, but abundantly more in the lovefeast which followed. The Lord did sit as a refiner's fire on many hearts. I would fain hope that our gracious God is reviving His work in the hearts of the

people. Indeed, from the testimony of many this evening, I had reason to believe that the great Head of the church was better to us than all my fears. I hear no particular complaint of any member; and I find several have of late found peace with God, while others are greatly stirred up to seek all the mind that was in Christ Jesus. I also gave notes of admission to several new members. My own soul breathed after entire conformity to her living Head. My cry was, "Give me, O Lord, constant union and deep fellowship with Thee. O, let me bear the image of the blessed Jesus, and fill me with all the fulness of God."

Thursday, 28th.—We set off early in the morning, and reached Charlestown to dine, and crossed the great river Susquehannah, at the lower ferry, about four o'clock. We then set off for a Mr. Dellam's, at Swan-Creek, where we met with a friendly and hearty welcome, both from him and his wife. I had not found myself so well, no, not for several months, as I found for these few days past, and especially since I left Philadelphia. We had a most pleasant journey for man and beast. If I had not crossed several large rivers before, I should have been a good deal surprised in crossing the Susquehannah. Where we crossed, I have reason to believe it was eight times broader than the river Thames at London-bridge. Indeed, several of the rivers that I have already crossed are grand beyond conception. The river Delaware, and Hudson's river, as well as the Susquehannah, are grand sights. The large trees on the sides, and the islands in the midst, form a pleasing prospect.

Sunday, 31st.—I preached this morning at eleven o'clock, where many had come from the country

around. Such a season I have not seen since I came to America. The Lord did indeed make the place of His feet glorious. The shout of a King was heard in our camp. From brother Waters's I rode to Bush chapel, and preached at three o'clock. There also the Lord made bare His holy arm among the numbers who attended. From the chapel I rode to brother Dellam's, and preached at six o'clock; and we concluded the day with prayer and praise. This has indeed been a day of the Son of man. To Thy name, O Lord, be the praise and glory!

Monday, November 1st.—I rode from brother Dellam's to Bush chapel, and preached at ten o'clock. From thence I rode to Deer-Creek, and preached at three, and afterwards met the society. The flame of Divine love went from heart to heart, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour. I spent the evening in praise and prayer with many of our friends, who had come to attend the Quarterly Meeting.

Wednesday, 3d.—After breakfast we finished the rest of our temporal business, and spent some time with the local preachers and stewards. At ten o'clock our general lovefeast began. It was now that the heavens were opened, and the skies poured down Divine righteousness. The inheritance of God was watered with the rain from heaven, and the dew thereof lay upon their branches. The Lion of the tribe of Judah got Himself the victory in many hearts. I had not seen such a season as this since I left my native land. Now it was that the Lord burst the cloud, which had at times rested upon my mind ever since I landed at Philadelphia. O Lord, my soul shall praise Thee, and all that is within me shall bless Thy holy name. I sincerely hope that

many will remember this day throughout the annals of eternity.

Philadelphia, Sunday, December 19th.—Brother Pilmore preached morning and evening. As he and brother Boardman are soon to depart for Great Britain, I thought it was highly proper they should preach as often as they could while they were with us.

Saturday, 25th.—We had a happy Christmas-day. Many praised God for the consolation. For six weeks past we have had such weather as I never saw in England or Scotland. Scarce a cloud to be seen in the sky. In general there was a small hoar-frost in the night, and clear sunshine all the day. The roads were now as dry as if it had been midsummer.

Sunday, 26th.—Brother Pilmore preached his farewell sermon in the evening, and we concluded the day with a general lovefeast. The presence of the Holy One of Israel was in the midst, and many rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Next day he set off for New York, from whence brother Boardman and he were to sail for England. Yet a little while, and we shall meet to part no more. The ensuing week being the close of the year, I hope it was employed and improved to the glory of God.

Sunday, January 30th, 1774.—This day was most intensely cold indeed. I never felt the like of it in all my life. The Delaware was frozen over, so that yesterday numbers came from the Jersey shore over to Philadelphia on the ice to market. Such a strange sight I never beheld before. To see a river, a mile broad, thus frozen over, and such numbers of people passing and repassing on the ice, was quite new to me. Few, comparatively speaking, attended the word, through the violence of the cold.

Sunday, February 6th.—The weather being a little more moderate, more attended the morning and evening service than last Sunday. I felt my body as if bruised all over, by the effects of the cold last week. We were enabled, however, to keep up our meetings, and could bless God for the consolation. I was enabled, also, to attend all our meetings the ensuing week, and to bless the name of the Lord for His mercy towards us.

Sunday, March 6th, New York.—I was better this morning, and preached now, and in the evening. The congregations were large, and the presence of the Holy One of Israel was in the midst. Surely I shall yet have pleasure in this city, to compensate for all my pain. I went through the duties of the ensuing week with pleasure. I observe that the labours of my fellow-labourer brother Shadford have not been in vain. The spirit of love seems to increase among the people.

Sunday, May 22d.—I found freedom to declare the word of the Lord this day ; and I trust the seed sown will produce some fruit to the glory of God. We concluded the evening with a general lovefeast, in which meeting the Lord's presence was powerfully felt by many persons. Many declared, with great freedom of speech, what God had done for their souls. Some of the poor black people spoke with power and pungency of the lovingkindness of the Lord. If the rich in this society were as much devoted to God as the poor are, we should see wonders done in this city. Holy Jesus, there is nothing impossible with Thee !

Monday, 23d.—After preaching in the morning, I prepared for my journey to Philadelphia, in order to meet my brethren in our second little Conference.

I found great freedom to speak to my fellow-passengers, both in the stage and in the passage-boats. In this respect I was enabled to redeem the time, and the Lord helped me to be faithful to the souls of my fellow-sinners. In these passage-boats, where there are sometimes thirty, forty, or fifty passengers, there are good opportunities of speaking a word for God. The bread that is then cast upon the waters may be seen after many days.

Wednesday, 25th.—Our little Conference began; and ended on Friday, the 27th. We proceeded in all things on the same plan as in England, which our Minutes will declare. Everything considered, we had reason to bless God for what He had done in about ten months. Above a thousand members are added to the societies, and most of these have found peace with God. We now labour in the provinces of New York, the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. We spoke our minds freely one to another in love; and whatever we thought would further the work, we most cheerfully embraced it. We had now more than seventeen preachers, who were to be employed the ensuing year, and upwards of two thousand members, with calls and openings into many fresh places. We stationed the preachers as well as we could, and all seemed to be satisfied.

Thursday, September 1st.—I rode to New-Mills, and preached to a large number in the Baptist meeting-house. Here, also, is the beginning of good days. On Friday I rode to Mount-Holy, and preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house, to an attentive congregation. I found profit and pleasure at this opportunity.

Here I met with Mr. John Brainerd, brother and successor to that great and good man, Mr. David

Brainerd, missionary to the Indians. I spent an agreeable hour with him after preaching. But, alas, what an unpleasing account did he give me of the remains of his most excellent brother's labours, as well as his own, among the Indians! When his brother died, a little above twenty years ago, he succeeded him in the mission. At that time there were a large company of Indians who regularly attended the preaching of the word, and above sixty who were communicants. They were now reduced to a small number who attended his ministry, and not above ten or twelve who were proper to be admitted to the Lord's table. I asked him the reason of this declension. Some, he observed, were dead, and died happy in the Lord; others had grown careless and lukewarm; and many had wandered back among the unawakened Indians, some of whom had turned again to their heathenish customs. There were also some who had given way to the love of spirituous liquors, from which they had once been wholly delivered; so that the gold was become dim, and the most fine gold changed.

Philadelphia, Sunday, October 2d.—I preached to a large attentive congregation this evening. I found much liberty and enlargement of soul in declaring the words of the living God. O, when will the Lord arise, and mightily shake the hearts and consciences of the people in this city? The judgments of God are spreading abroad in these lands; and a most portentous cloud hangs over these provinces. From the appearance of things, one would think that every person would turn from their sins unto the living God; but, strange to tell, with many, wickedness seems to abound more and more. What shall the end of these things be? I have

endeavoured to warn the people, and to lead them to a proper improvement of the present alarming tokens. From the first of my coming here, it has always been impressed on my mind, that God has a controversy with the inhabitants of the British colonies; and so I said to some in my first visit to New York. It will be seen shortly whether my fears and views were properly founded or not.

Monday, 31st.—I met brother Williams, who had come from Virginia to be present at our Quarterly Meeting. Brothers Shadford, Duke, and Webster were present also. They had come from different parts of the Circuit, and our meeting together was a time of love. I preached in the evening with pleasure and satisfaction.

Tuesday, November 1st.—Being the Quarterly Meeting, we had our general lovefeast in the forenoon; and we finished the business of the Circuit after dinner. In the evening we had our watch-night. This was a day to be remembered; and I hope it will be by some to all eternity. The heavens were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness. The Lord spoke to many hearts with a mighty voice; and the shout of the King of glory was heard in our camp. Blessed be the name of our God for ever and for evermore!

Monday, 7th.—We rode to Henry-Waters, near Deer-Creek, where we intended holding our Quarterly Meeting for Baltimore and Kent Circuit on the eastern shore.

Tuesday, 8th.—When I arose this morning my mind was much oppressed, but I was enabled to look to Jesus. After an early breakfast we spent about two hours in the affairs of the Circuits. At ten our general lovefeast began. There were such a number

of whites and blacks as never had attended on such an occasion before. After we had sung and prayed, the cloud burst from my mind, and the power of the Lord descended in such an extraordinary manner as I had never seen since my landing at Philadelphia. All the preachers were so overcome with the Divine presence, that they could scarce address the people; but only in broken accents saying, "This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven!" When any of the people stood up to declare the lovingkindness of God, they were so overwhelmed with the Divine presence, that they were obliged to sit down, and let silence speak His praise. Near the close of our meeting I stood up, and called upon the poor people to look towards that part of the chapel where all the blacks were. I then said, "See the number of the black Africans who have stretched out their hands and hearts to God!" While I was addressing the people thus, it seemed as if the very house shook with the mighty power and glory of Sinai's God. Many of the people were so overcome, that they were ready to faint and die under His almighty hand. For about three hours the gale of the Spirit thus continued to breathe upon the dry bones; and they did live the life of glorious love! As for myself, I scarcely knew whether I was in the body or not; and so it was with all my brethren. We did not know how to break up the meeting or part asunder. Surely the fruits of this season will remain to all eternity.

For some time past my mind has been much affected, and my spirit not a little pressed down, at the prospect of public affairs in this country. Matters look extremely gloomy; and what the end of these things will be, who can tell? This I am fully certain

of, that, to all human appearance, this land will become a field of blood. My soul laments that so few seem to lay it to heart, or turn to the Hand that shakes the rod over them. Most appear to put their trust in man, and make flesh their arm; but, alas! their hearts do not cleave to the living God.

Tuesday, May 16th, 1775.—The preachers came together from their different Circuits, and next day we began our little Conference. We conversed together, and concluded our business in love. Mr. Stringer spent some time with us. We wanted all the advice and light we could obtain respecting our conduct in the present critical situation of affairs. We all came unanimously to this conclusion, to follow the advice that Mr. Wesley and his brother had given us, and leave the event to God. We had abundant reason to bless God for the increase of His work last year. We had above a thousand added to the different societies, and they had increased to ten Circuits. Our joy in God would have been abundantly more, had it not been for the preparations of war that now rung throughout this city (Philadelphia).

Wednesday, June 7th.—I spent an agreeable hour with Mr. John Brainerd, at Mount-Holy. He gave me a fuller account than he had done before of the Indians under his care; and from what he said, I am more fully convinced of what I have thought before, that none can do good among those outcasts of men, comparatively speaking, but those, and those alone, who are peculiarly raised up and called by God to that work. His brother, David Brainerd, was such a one; and such must all be who will be of use in the conversion of the Indians.

Thursday, 15th.—I returned to Philadelphia,

where I spent ten days with profit and pleasure. I do not know when I found more liberty, either in public or private, than I did at this season. The Lord enabled me to speak from the heart; and I trust it went to the hearts of many. All this week we had alarm upon alarm, by the accounts we received from New-England.

Sunday, 25th.—I was enabled to deliver my soul this evening to all who heard me. I felt conviction that I was clear of the blood of all who have heard me in this city. The time may come when some may call to mind what they have heard, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Thursday, July 20th.—I rode to the chapel at the forks of Gunpowder-Falls, and preached to a numerous congregation. This being the day set apart for a general fast, by the Congress, throughout all the British provinces, all the serious part of the inhabitants paid a particular attention to the same. I endeavoured to open up and enforce the cause of all our misery. I told them that the sins of Great Britain and her colonies had long called aloud for vengeance; and in a peculiar manner the dreadful sin of buying and selling the souls and bodies of the poor Africans, the sons and daughters of Ham. I felt but poorly when I began to preach; but the Lord was my strength, and enabled me to speak with power, and to meet the society afterwards. After the service was over, I rode to Mr. Gough's, at Perry-Hall. He and his wife had, by the mercy of God, lately found a sense of the Divine favour, and now cheerfully opened their house and hearts to receive the ministers and children of God. I spent a most agreeable evening with Mr. and Mrs. Gough, and

the rest of the family. A numerous family of the servants were called in to prayer and exhortation; so that with them and the rest of the house we had a little congregation. The Lord was in the midst, and we praised Him with joyful lips. The simplicity of spirit discovered by Mr. and Mrs. Gough was truly pleasing. At every opportunity he was declaring what the Lord had done for his soul; still wondering at the matchless love of Jesus, who had plucked him as a brand from the burning. A gentleman in Bristol, who had died some years ago, left Mr. Gough an estate, in money, houses, and land, to the value of upwards of sixty or seventy thousand pounds. In the midst of all this he was miserable; nor did he ever find true felicity till he found it in the love of God his Saviour. O that he may live to be an ornament to the religion of Jesus Christ, both by example and precept!

Monday, June 17th, 1776.—I set out for Leeseburgh; and after preaching at several places by the way, I came there on Friday. I called at Mr. Fairfax's, (a relation of old Lord Fairfax,) a gentleman of large estate, and who of late has been savingly brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was over at Baltimore at our little Conference; and at the lovefeast that followed, he spoke of what God had done for his soul, with such simplicity and unction from on high, as greatly affected everyone who heard him. May he live to be an ornament to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus!

Sunday, 30th.—I was greatly pleased at the arrival of brother Shadford this morning. His coming strengthened my hands in God. I preached at the chapel a little way from brother Burshan's, at ten o'clock. I felt poorly both in body and mind; but

the Lord stood by me, and enabled me to speak with a degree of power and Divine pungency. After preaching I met the society, and we found the presence of the Lord to be with us. After dinner I observed to brother Shadford, that I feared I should not have strength to preach in the afternoon. A little rest, however, refreshed me, and at four o'clock I went to the chapel again. I preached from Rev. iii. 8. Towards the close of the sermon, I found an uncommon struggle in my breast, and in the twinkling of an eye my soul was so filled with the power and love of God, that I could scarce get out my words. I scarce had spoken two sentences, while under this amazing influence, before the very house seemed to shake, and all the people were overcome with the presence of the Lord God of Israel. Such a scene my eyes saw, and ears heard, as I never was witness to before. Through the mercy and goodness of God, I had seen many glorious displays of the arm of the Lord, in the different parts of His vineyard, where His providence had called me to labour; but such a time as this I never, never beheld. Numbers were calling out aloud for mercy, and many were mightily praising God their Saviour; while others were in an agony for full redemption in the blood of Jesus. Soon, very soon, my voice was drowned amidst the pleasing sounds of prayer and praise. Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven with them, and parents calling upon their children to come to the Lord Jesus: and what was peculiarly affecting, I observed in the gallery appropriated for the black people, almost the whole of them upon their knees; some for themselves, and others for their distressed companions. In short, look where we would, all was wonder and amazement. As my

strength was almost gone, I desired brother Shadford to speak a few words to them. He attempted so to do, but was so overcome with the Divine presence, that he was obliged to sit down; and this was the case, both with him and myself, over and over again. We could only sit still, and let the Lord do His own work. For upwards of two hours the mighty outpouring of the Spirit of God continued upon the congregation. As many of them had come from far, we, with the greatest difficulty and the most earnest persuasions, got them to depart, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening. Some of them had to ride ten, and others sixteen, miles to their habitations. Such a day of the Son of man my eyes never beheld before. From the best accounts we could receive afterwards, upwards of fifty were awakened, and brought to the knowledge of a pardoning God that day; besides many who were enabled to witness that the blood of Jesus had cleansed them from all sin.

Tuesday, August 27th.—Our Quarterly Meeting began as usual with our lovefeast, and ended with our watch-afternoon. Truly this was a day of the Son of man, and great was our glorying in God our Saviour. In the lovefeast, the flame of Divine love ran from heart to heart, and many were enabled to declare the great things which the Lord had done for their souls. Early in the morning, some of our kind friends came and told me that they were informed a company of the militia, with their officers, intended to come and take me and the other preachers up. Some of our good women came, and with tears would have persuaded me to leave the place, and go to some other friend's house for safety. I thanked them for their love, and was obliged to them for their kind

attention to my personal safety; but I added, "I am come hither by the providence of God, and I am sent on an errand of love to the souls that shall attend; and thus engaged in my Lord's work, I fear nothing, and will abide the consequences, be they what they will." I had retired a little by myself, when one and another came to my room-door, and begged I would not venture out to preach, for the officers and their men were come. I felt no perturbation of mind, but was perfectly calm and collected. I told our friends, their business was to pray, and mine to deliver the message of God. Soon after, I went to the arbour, which was fitted up for preaching, and then I beheld the officers and soldiers in the skirts of the congregation. After singing, I called all the people to lift up their hearts to God, as the heart of one man. They did so indeed. When we arose from our knees, most of the congregation were bathed in tears; and I beheld several of the officers and their men wiping their eyes also. I had not spoken ten minutes in preaching, when a cry went through all the people, and I observed some of the officers, as well as many of the soldiers, trembling as they stood. I concluded my sermon in peace; and the other preachers prayed and exhorted after me, till the conclusion of the service. I was informed afterwards by some of our friends, that some of the officers said, "God forbid that we should hurt one hair of the head of such a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has this day so clearly and powerfully shown us the way of salvation." They departed to their own homes, and we spent the evening in peace and love. This afternoon, and in particular in the evening, I had a strong impulse upon, and presentiment in my mind, that there had been an

engagement between the British and American troops. I mentioned it to one of the preachers, and added, "We shall soon hear whether this be of God or not."

Wednesday, we set off early on our way for Philadelphia, and reached Newcastle, on the Delaware river, on Thursday afternoon. About ten o'clock that evening an express arrived, that there had been a general engagement on Long Island, near New York, and that some thousands of the American troops were cut to pieces. After preaching by the way, I came in safety to Philadelphia on Saturday forenoon.

Sunday, December 1st.—I preached at New-Mills, to one of the most attentive, as well as the largest, congregations that I ever saw in that place. After spending a few days, I purposed returning to Philadelphia, in order to settle some matters respecting the books; and then to return to the Jerseys again, in my way to New York, on purpose to spend some time there, as they had been without a regular preacher for some months. But herein I was disappointed, as the noise and tumult occasioned by the British army marching through this province, and the American army retiring before them, threw every thing into confusion, and made it unsafe for me to travel. I was therefore obliged to tarry, and spend my time among the different societies in that neighbourhood. This whole month was spent in battles and skirmishes between the British troops and the Americans. It is not my intention to give a detail, or my judgment, of these matters: suffice it to say, that the business belongs to the historian.

I remember an old planter, Mr. Joshua Owings, of Garrison-forest, about sixteen miles from Baltimore, telling me one day when at his house, among

other anecdotes, that when a young man, he and another white man, with two young Indians, frequently went a hunting together at the proper season. Frederick county, which joins that of Baltimore, was then but very thinly inhabited; and, being in many places rough and hilly, was a proper retreat for wild beasts of different kinds. One day they came to a place where one of the Indians told his companions, they were almost sure to find a bear. They had not searched long before they found one in a kind of small cave in a large rock. One of the Indians spied some light at the further end of the hole, and told them the bear had two entrances to his retreat. They agreed for two to remain below, and two to mount the rock above; a white man and an Indian at each place. This was done accordingly, and they soon found that the Indian conjectured rightly. The two that were above had not been long there before the bear, who had seen them below, clambered up to the top of the rock, and just as his breast was clear of the hole, one of the Indians let fly an arrow and pierced his gullet. Up he bounced, and over the rock he went, but soon the Indian lodged another arrow in his back. He had not run four hundred yards before he halted, and rolled himself, being apparently in great agony. It was not long before he expired; and when they cut out the arrows, they observed that which entered his gullet had found its way to, and lodged itself in, the animal's heart, which so soon put a period to his life. This is a proof of the address of the Indians in such matters, and how soon they could be an overmatch for such creatures without the use of the gun. Nearly at the same time they found another in his hole; and the question was, who would undertake to shoot the bear

where he lodged, as they were sure he would not come out. The difficulty was, whoever attempted it, the person must creep some way into the hole, and should he only wound him, he would be in danger of being torn to pieces. After some dispute, one of the Indians determined to despatch him. He crept in, and then fired his piece, and roared aloud to pull him out. The hole being full of smoke, the rest could see nothing ; but as soon as the smoke cleared away they got him out ; but his fears were in vain, for poor bruin lay completely dead at the end of his retreat. There is one thing a little remarkable of this creature : no person, either white man or Indian, ever killed a she-bear with young. It is generally supposed, that after conception the she-bears hide themselves in the most secret places till after they have brought forth their young.

In the beginning of June, 1778, I once more had the happiness of meeting my dear friends in London. For some time I was in a new world. The happiness I enjoyed was unspeakable, and the Lord owned my poor labours with a blessing. The pleasure I experienced in seeing my brethren once more, was beyond what words can describe. I was stationed for London, where I laboured for two years in concert with my valuable friend Mr. Pawson ; and I trust our labours were not in vain.

At the Conference in Bristol, in 1783, I requested Mr. Wesley to appoint me as a supernumerary for London. He acceded to my request. My brethren there have kindly proportioned my labours to my strength ; for which I feel truly obliged to them.

Should it please God that they should come to my years, I hope they will meet the same kind returns from their brethren. My only desire is to spend my few remaining days to the best of purposes. I have many mercies to praise my Lord for. I have bread to eat, and am enabled to owe no man anything but love. Thus hath my Lord graciously dealt with His unworthy creature. I earnestly desire to love Him more, and to be fully prepared for whatever His Divine providence has prepared for me. I have many times, for several years past, looked forward with a gust of joy at the pleasing prospect of soon joining my dear friends who have gone before. Yes, in those glorious realms,

“ Where Jonathan his David meets,
Our souls shall soon embrace ! ”

I thank my God for the Christian friends I now enjoy on earth ; but some of my dearest and most beloved have gained the peaceful shore of eternal repose. To those happy climes I wish to bend my course with more alacrity and joy.

July 31st, 1808.

IN this disposition Mr. Rankin continued to labour in the London Circuit till a few months previous to his departure. He generally preached once or twice every Lord's day, and occasionally on week-day evenings. He likewise met a class, attended the leaders' and preachers' meetings, and the meeting for the penitents, on Saturday evenings ; at that meeting he generally prayed, and frequently exhorted.

For many weeks previous to his death, several of

his friends saw that his constitution was fast breaking; but had the happiness at the same time to discern in him a more than usually growing meetness for heaven. His love of souls continuing unabated, he preached as often as he was able, and his last ministrations were more acceptable and profitable to the people even than the preceding. Peculiarities he certainly had, which sometimes prevented his being as useful as otherwise he would have been; but they were such as consisted in him with great devotedness to, and deep communion with, God.

Mr. Griffith, who knew him well and long, says, "I always found him, after his confinement to the house, under a very blessed influence of the Holy Spirit, calmly confident towards God his heavenly Father, through the atonement, resigned to His all-wise disposal, and thankful for His benefits. At one time he said, 'Here I am, in the enjoyment of many comforts, and favoured with many kind attentions, of which many of God's children are destitute. What am I, Lord, and what my father's house, that Thou shouldest show me such favours?'"

The following account by Mr. Benson, which reaches till within three days of his death, will be found highly interesting and edifying. How encouraging is it to those soldiers of Christ who have not yet put off their harness, to see an aged brother triumph through Christ over the king of terrors!

"Wednesday evening, May 9th," says Mr. Benson, "among many other things, he said, 'I long to publish with my latest breath His love and guardian care.' I said, 'I doubt not but you will publish it to the last.' He replied, 'It is what I have prayed for, for many years.' He then broke out in praise, 'O glory, glory for ever, glory be to God for all His

goodness ! I have here a comfortable bed to lie on, kind friends about me who love me, and all the blessings I could have, together with the grace of God, and hopes of glory ! I have just been desiring Mrs. Hovatt to read that hymn, some of the lines of which are,

‘ O the infinite cares, and temptations, and suares,
Thy hand hath conducted me through ;
O the blessings bestow’d by a bountiful God,
And the mercies eternally new ! ’

Speaking of the Methodist society, he said, ‘ I did not immediately join the people when awakened and convinced. I hesitated some time ; but, glory be to God, that He inclined me to cast in my lot among them. But I had some thoughts of becoming a minister in the Church of Scotland at that time.’ I said, ‘ You have been much more useful among the Methodists.’ ‘ Yes,’ replied he, ‘ both you and I have, than we should have been anywhere else ; but I have been very unfaithful to the grace of God.’ ‘ We have all too great reason,’ I answered, ‘ to make that confession ; but when we see so many beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the flesh, we have very great cause for thankfulness that we have been kept by the power of God in the good way : and how many dangers has God brought you through by sea and land !’ ‘ Yes,’ said he, ‘ I have been lashed to the pump when the waves have gone over me, endeavouring to keep the ship from sinking, and all the passengers from going to the bottom. Then I was wandering from God ; but He brought me back. That,’ observed he, ‘ was before I was a preacher.’

“ Saturday evening, May 12th.—When I called, I found he was so weak, and that so many had called upon him, that I did not go up to see him. Finding,

however, that I had been there, he sent his servant to desire I would go back and pray with him; which I was prevented from doing. On Monday I called again, and found him very much weaker indeed, but perfectly resigned to the will of God, and patiently waiting till his change should come. He desired his daughter-in-law to tell me what had been determined about the service to be performed at his funeral. 'Let my name,' said he, 'be written in the dust; but if anything can be said on the occasion of my death that may benefit the living, let it be done.' 'Is there any particular text,' I asked, 'which you would wish to be spoken from on the occasion?' After pausing a little, he said, 'As a general subject, I know none more suitable than 1 Peter i. 3, *Blessed*,' &c.; 'but let my name be written in the dust.' As he expressed a desire for more consolation, I said, 'I hope you will not reason about that: leave it entirely to the Lord. He has for many years enabled you to show your faith by your works, by living to Him in whom you believe; and your state cannot now be affected by your feeling a greater or less measure of consolation. Your whole reliance must be on the word and promise of Him who will never leave those that trust in Him. The mercy, truth, and faithfulness of God, in Christ, must be the ground of your confidence.' He then quoted those lines,

'While Jesu's blood,' &c.

'A most blessed hymn,' said I; 'and observe what follows:—

'Fix'd on this ground,' &c.

At this he seemed to be greatly comforted. 'I sometimes think,' said I, 'we are not sufficiently thankful that the Lord has kept us so many years in the way.

Since I passed over the mountains with you from Cumberland to Newcastle, in the latter end of the year 1765, how many have we known to turn aside to the right and to the left ! but we have been kept, and have neither brought any dishonour upon the Gospel, nor been stumbling-blocks in the way of any. And now you will soon join the wise and good collected out of all nations,' &c. 'Delightful consideration!' replied he. 'Our chief felicity,' said I, 'shall be the vision and enjoyment of God ; and what wonder that the holy Scriptures give us this view of future happiness? For surely the vision we shall then have of a Being infinitely amiable, and loving us infinitely, must be infinitely transporting.' We then joined in prayer, and were refreshed indeed. He was affected and filled with consolation, and, when I rose from my knees, took me by the hand, and said,

'Lo, God is here, let us adore,' &c."

In this humble, resigned, and happy frame of spirit he continued till, on May 17th, 1810, he finished his course with joy, after having faithfully served God in his generation.

From the foregoing narrative, the judicious reader will form a tolerably correct idea of Mr. Rankin's character; the most striking traits of which are sincerity, steadiness, and sobriety. We highly respect the memory of a man who, in various and trying situations of life, both at home and abroad, maintained for upwards of fifty years an unblemished character. This, through Divine grace, did Mr. Rankin. In short, he was a man truly devoted to God his Saviour; and in death witnessed a good confession.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. GEORGE STORY.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in the year 1738, at Harthill, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. At four years of age I had learned the Catechism, and had repeated it before the minister in the church.

About that time I had a narrow escape: being near the edge of a deep pond, my foot slipped, and I plunged in; but, recovering myself, I struggled to the side, and, laying hold on some weeds, got out, no one being near that could give me any assistance.

In my sixth year I had read the Bible through several times, and other books that came in my way; particularly the History of the Sufferings of the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont; which fixed in me an aversion to the principles of the Church of Rome. Among the practical treatises in this History, was a Caveat against Dancing, wherein was asserted that "every step a dancer takes is a step to hell." This so affected me, that no inducement could ever prevail upon me to attend the dancing-school; which I esteem a singular mercy, as it pre-

vented connexions that might have proved very pernicious.

One day I wantonly threw a stone, and killed a young bird belonging to a neighbour. Though no one saw me, yet for several nights I had little sleep. The idea of the bird's expiring in agonies through my wickedness, filled me with inexpressible anguish. I would have given a great deal to have restored the little creature to life. Tears and prayers to God for pardon, and promises to offend Him thus no more, was the only way wherein I found relief.

My parents taught me early the fear of the Lord, as far as they knew; and though their instructions were tedious and irksome, yet they made an impression on my mind that was never lost, but often recurred when I was alone, or in places of temptation.

Our minister was a pious venerable man, and performed his duty with a solemnity that often struck me with awe of the Divine presence; particularly when he was reading the burial service, I frequently had a distant prospect of judgment and eternity. I was agreeably affected with thunder and lightning. It filled me with a sense of God's majesty and power; for which reason I would get into the midst of it, though ever so dreadful, if I was not prevented, that I might enjoy the whole report, and see the full blaze.

In my seventh year I lost all relish for learning, and contracted several evil habits. The two following years my time at school was spent to little purpose: part of this I attribute to the being too early taught to read, and too close application to it; and part to the want of a proper master, who could suit my genius and engage my curiosity for useful know-

ledge. But my master dying, and being succeeded by one whose ability and method were adapted to my capacity, I soon recovered my thirst for learning, and made considerable improvement therein.

Before I was well able to carry a gun, I was fond of shooting; till being out one day in the fields, my gun went off at half-cock, and was within a very little of killing my brother: this filled me with such horror, that I could not endure that exercise any more.

When I was about ten years of age, God began to revive His work of grace in and about Sheffield; the rumour of which spread into our village, and occasioned serious reflections in the minds of many. One evening, as I was hearkening to the conversation of my parents on that subject, I was struck with an observation they made, that prayer was nothing unless the mind was stayed on God. At night, when I repeated my customary prayers, I watched my thoughts narrowly, and soon found that they wandered from the Lord all the time. This discovery deeply affected me: I strove with all my might to think on God as being present, seeing and hearing me; and after repeated efforts, through grace I prevailed. I now began to delight in duties; to pray fervently and feelingly, with or without a form; and many times the Lord answered me in such a manner as clearly convinced me of His omniscience and omnipresence. I read the Bible with pleasure and profit: the sufferings of Christ filled me with wonder and gratitude, as I now understood that He endured them all for my sins, and to save my soul from eternal destruction. Reading in the Thirty-nine Articles, that justification was by faith, I endeavoured to cast my soul upon the Lord

in the best manner I was able, and at times was persuaded that He had forgiven all my trespasses. Though I had never heard any of the Methodist preachers, yet from that time I felt an esteem for them; and notwithstanding they were loaded with all manner of reproach, and represented in the most detestable light, those calumnies only increased my regard for them, because I understood that true Christians, in all former ages, had met with the same treatment from the world.

Having acquired all the learning that was taught at a country school, my friends began to think of putting me to some business. Going one day to a bookseller's shop, in a neighbouring market-town, I got acquainted with him; and my friends accepting of his proposals, I soon after went with him to his place of residence. This introduced me into company, and exposed me to temptations I never knew before: and yet the Spirit of God strove with me more than ever: almost every night I was called to a strict account by that inward monitor, and reproved for the faults of the day; and I could seldom sleep till with prayers and tears I had implored mercy, and in some degree obtained it from the Lord; and in this manner I went on for about a year.

I had often been perplexed with the doctrine of predestination, but now the tempter drew me insensibly into it. He continually suggested, that if I was to be saved, I certainly should, live as I list; but if I was ordained to be damned, there was no remedy; God Himself could not save me; and therefore it was mere folly to give myself so much concern about it. But although these suggestions tended to stupefy my conscience, and harden my heart, yet I was more uneasy than ever. The Methodists at

that time were few and feeble ; they had seldom any travelling preachers : I sometimes attended their prayer-meetings, and often followed them up and down the town, hoping they would turn and speak to me ; but none took any notice of me. I was left alone to struggle with sin and Satan.

One day hearing a preacher was to be there, I attended ; but he did not come. Upon this, one of the local preachers, who was then a Calvinist, gave an exhortation ; in which he fairly repeated the words that Satan had so often suggested to me ; namely, that if we were to be saved, we could not possibly perish ; and if we were to be damned, there was no help for us. This made a deep impression, and confirmed all that the devil had been preaching to me for years. I believed the horrible doctrine, and from that time determined to give myself as little trouble as possible about religion.

Being surrounded with books, I read the first that came to hand,—histories, novels, plays, and romances, by dozens ; but they only pleased while my eyes were upon them, and afterwards furnished matter for a thousand vain imaginations. I then read “The Lives of the Heathen Philosophers,” with admiration, and determined to copy after them. I perfected myself in geometry and trigonometry ; then I learned Macauley’s short-hand ; soon after, geography and astronomy, together with botany, anatomy, physic, and several branches of natural philosophy. Once I intended studying the law, and read a great deal in “The Statutes at large,” and other law books : but the subject was too dry and unentertaining for one of my desultory disposition. I could recollect reading over three hundred volumes, of one kind or another, (some of them were large folios,) before I was sixteen

years old. My passion for books was insatiable. I frequently read till ten or eleven o'clock at night, and began again at four or five o'clock in the morning; nor had I patience to eat my meat, unless I had a book before me.

But about this time I was weary of the shop, and entered the printing-office. This opened a new scene of things, which pleased me for a season. I was determined to be a complete master of my business, and in about two years was able to accomplish my day's work in six hours, so that I had much time upon my hands for study and recreations. One summer I was an angler, attended the rivers early every morning; but this, after a few months' trial, brought me neither pleasure nor profit. The next summer I commenced florist, took a garden, was passionately fond of auriculas, polyanthuses, &c. But this, too, soon grew insipid: happiness was not to be found in these pursuits. In the midst of my reading I met with some deistical authors: I read and reasoned, till the Bible grew not only dull, but, I thought, full of contradictions. I staggered first at the Divinity of Christ; and at length gave up the Bible altogether, and sunk into Fatalism and Deism.

This new light promised great satisfaction. I thought myself much wiser than others; but, alas, it soon led into a dreary labyrinth! My ideas of God and religion were quite confounded. I felt the wretchedness of my heart, but could discover no way to escape from it.

About the age of eighteen the management of the printing-office fell to my share. I had a weekly newspaper to publish, all the paragraphs to select from the public prints, the advertisements to prepare,

the press to correct, and the journeymen and the apprentices to superintend. This flattered my vanity, increased my native pride, and consequently led me further from God. I then sought happiness in card-playing; but, after repeated trials, it appeared such a silly waste of time, and so opposite to common sense, that I was obliged to give it up. Twice or thrice I got into company, and was intoxicated with liquor; but in the midst of this folly I saw its madness, and turned from it with abhorrence. I likewise saw its ruinous consequences in those I was daily surrounded with. However, I hoped a horse-race was a more manly and rational amusement: I therefore attended the races at Doncaster, with the most flattering expectation of the happiness I should find that week. The first day vanished without any satisfaction: the second was still worse. As I passed through the company dejected and disappointed, it occurred to my mind, "What is all this immense multitude assembled here for? To see a few horses gallop two or three times round the course, as if the devil was in both them and their riders! Certainly we are all mad; we are fit for Bedlam, if we imagine that the Almighty made us for no other purpose but to seek happiness in such senseless amusements!" I was ashamed and confounded, and determined never to be seen there any more.

When I was twenty years old, I was glad of the opportunity of seeing London. I went up full of the most sanguine expectation of finding the happiness I was in search of, and therefore lost no time in seeing and hearing everything new and curious that I could gain access to. But new things quickly grew old, and the repeated sight of them soon proved disgustful. No happiness followed, but an unac-

countable anguish of spirit whenever I attended to the sensations of my own mind. Then I would gladly have travelled into any part of Europe or America, hoping a continual change of scenes would satisfy me. But it was war-time, and I could not embark for Holland without a passport from the Secretary of State, which I did not know how to procure.

At length I resolved to try if religion would afford me any relief. I went to several places of worship; but even this was in vain: there was something dull and disagreeable wherever I turned my eyes, and I knew not that the malady was in myself. At length I found Mr. Whitefield's chapel in Tottenham-court-road, and was agreeably entertained with his manner of preaching: his discourses were so engaging, that when I retired to my lodgings, I wrote down the substance of them in my journal, and frequently read them over with pleasure; but still nothing reached my case, nor had I any light into the state of my soul. Meantime, on the week-nights I went to the theatres; nor could I discern any difference between Mr. Whitefield's preaching and seeing a good tragedy.

Being now weary of everything, and every place being equal to me, (for I carried about with me a mind that was never at rest,) I embraced the invitation of my friends, and returned into the country. I was kindly received, and solicited to enter into business for myself. But, reflecting that I was young and unexperienced, I declined the offer, and engaged with a person to manage his printing-office. I was now in an agreeable situation. I wanted for nothing. I had more money than I knew what to do with. Yet, notwithstanding, I was as wretched as I could

live, without knowing either the cause of this misery, or any way to escape.

I had now for some years attempted to regulate my conduct according to reason ; but, alas ! I stood condemned, in a thousand instances, even at the bar of that partial judge. From my infancy I was exceedingly passionate ; and this evil grew upon me, and caused bitter reflections on various occasions. I knew that anger was a paroxysm of madness ; that it was contrary to reason in every respect : I therefore guarded against it with all my might. Sometimes I conquered ; and those transient victories greatly pleased me. But if an unexpected temptation suddenly occurred, all my resolutions were but as a thread of flax before the fire ; and my behaviour was more like that of an enraged wild beast, than of a rational creature. Sometimes, when among facetious company, I endeavoured to catch their spirit ; but in the midst of levity I had a dread upon me. Experience taught me, that their laughter was madness. As soon as I returned to sober thoughts, I found my feigned mirth left a melancholy upon my mind, and this was succeeded either by storms of passion or an aversion even to life. During this dark night of apostasy, I lost all remembrance of God's former goodness. I wandered to different places of religious worship, but found sufficient matter everywhere to be disgusted : at length I forsook them all, and on Sundays confined myself to my room, or retired to the centre of a neighbouring wood. Here I considered, with the closest attention I was able, the arguments for and against Deism. I would gladly have given credit to the Christian revelation, but could not. My reason leaned to the wrong side, and involved me in endless perplexities. I likewise

endeavoured to fortify myself with stronger arguments and firmer resolutions against my evil tempers; for since I could not be a Christian, I wished, however, to be a good moral heathen. Internal anguish frequently compelled me to supplicate the Divine Being for mercy and truth. I seldom gave over till my heart was melted, and I felt something of God's presence. But I retained those gracious impressions only for a short time.

Being employed in abridging and printing the Life of Eugene Aram, who was hung in chains at Knaresborough for murder, I observed that by intense application he attained to a prodigious knowledge in the sciences and languages. I was so engaged with this account, that I determined on the same acquisitions; vainly imagining that as I had the desire, so I had the capacity, to learn everything. While I was musing upon these matters, and fixing the plan for my future proceedings, the following thoughts fastened upon my mind, and broke in pieces all my schemes:—"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. What did this man's wisdom profit him? It did not save him from being a thief and a murderer; no, nor from attempting even his own life. True wisdom is foolishness with men. He that will be wise must first become a fool, that he may be wise!" I was like a man awakened out of sleep. I was astonished. I felt myself wrong. I was conscious I had been pursuing a vain shadow, and that God only could direct me into the right path. I therefore applied to Him with earnest importunity, entreating Him to show me the true way to happiness; which I was determined to follow, however difficult or dangerous.

Just at this time a work of grace broke out in the

village where I was born, through the labours of a person remarkably zealous for the cause of God. My mother in particular was deeply convinced of the truth, which she soon experienced, and retained the life and power thereof to her dying day. She was much concerned for me; hoping, if I could be brought among religious persons, I should likewise soon be convinced. She therefore, by an acquaintance, entreated me to converse with the Methodists. I answered, "If my mother desires it, I will visit them with all my heart." The first time I entered a Methodist's house, they went to prayer with me and for me, a considerable time. I looked upon them as well-meaning, ignorant people, and thought no more about the matter. In a few days they desired I would come and see them again. Considering it was my mother's request, I went without hesitation. I found four or five persons in the house, with whom I disputed about religion for some hours, till I had fairly wearied them. They laboured to convince me that I was a sinner, and in danger of eternal death if I did not repent and return to God. These were subjects I had no kind of idea of; and as their arguments were only supported by Scripture, for which I had very little regard, all they said made not the least impression.

As I was about to withdraw, not a little elevated with my imaginary victory, one of the company desired to ask me a few questions. The first was, "Are you happy?" My countenance instantly fell, and I answered from the dictates of my conscience, "No." She then inquired, if I was not desirous of finding happiness. I replied, it had been my pursuit ever since I could remember; that I was willing to obtain it on any terms; and that I had sought

for it every way I could think of, but in vain. She then showed me the true way of obtaining the happiness I wanted; assuring me, if I sought the Lord with all my heart, I should certainly find in Him that peace and pleasure which the world could not bestow. Every word sunk deep into my mind; and from that moment I never lost my convictions, nor my resolution to be truly devoted to God.

I immediately broke off all connexion with my companions; threw my useless books into the fire; and sought the Lord with all my might. I soon discovered the importance of the Scriptures; that there was no other revelation of the Divine will to mankind; that I must credit the truths contained therein, however opposite they appeared to my own vitiated reason. I found my reason had been deceived and corrupted by the suggestions of an enemy, and that I could trust it no more till it was renewed by grace; that my memory was filled with a train of false ideas every moment presenting themselves, and leading me from God; and that my understanding was totally dark, till Divine illumination should visit me.

Reading Mr. Hervey's Dialogues, this light shone upon me, and I was much delighted with the discovery of the Divinity of Christ, and the atonement which He made for sinners. About this time I heard Mr. Fugill preach: his discourse was suited to one in my state, and the power of my evil reasonings was suspended while he described the work of grace in the soul; I saw the way of justification and full sanctification so clearly, that I could trace the path as if it had been a road delineated in a map.

The next discovery I had was the hardness of my heart. This called off my attention from everything

else : neither fears nor joys, heaven nor hell, made any impression on it. I often thought that Satan himself could not possibly have a more obdurate heart. I found it was full of pride, ambition, anger, evil desire, unbelief, and everything that was vile and vain. Being invited to join the society, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and found much encouragement to seek the Lord, notwithstanding all the wretchedness I felt in myself.

Attending to the experience of the people, I observed that almost all of them, during the time of conviction, were exercised with horrible fears and terrors ; and thence I concluded it was necessary I should have the same. For at that time I did not know, that frequently those distracting terrors were from the enemy, in order to drive the soul into despair. I therefore used every method to bring myself under dreadful apprehensions, hoping this would break my stubborn heart ; but I could never find that kind of experience. After several weeks struggling with this obduracy, at last I resigned myself to the Lord, when He was pleased to regard my distress ; and while William Brammah was at prayer, the softening power of grace descended, and removed the stony heart.

I now found a great change in my mind, but it was not complete ; for I had no consciousness of the pardon of sin, which I was convinced was the privilege of the children of God ; therefore I could not conclude myself justified. However, I began to seek for that blessing with all diligence. Many difficulties occurred in the way. The old train of pernicious ideas continually presented themselves : I could not meditate a moment without sinking into Deism ; and I was equally embarrassed with the doctrine of

predestination. Indeed, their connexion seemed inseparable: I could not by any means disjoin one from the other. And I repeatedly found that the moment I suffered my mind to embrace either of them, I lost sight of God, and plunged into blackness of darkness. The wretchedness I then felt was insupportable, accompanied with suggestions to blaspheme, or to embrace Atheism. After many sore conflicts, the Lord showed me a path by which I might escape; and that was by staying my mind upon Him, and ceasing from these reasonings. This I found was a safe, though painful, path; it equally mortified my proud reason and vain imaginations, while gracious promises occurred, and encouraged me to follow on to know the Lord. Now I began to look up for the pardon of sin; I saw that it was purchased by Christ, and that God gave it freely; that no works or sufferings of mine could in the least degree merit this blessing, but that it was to be received by faith.

But here again I was greatly embarrassed. The Scriptures universally testified that I must believe or perish: my friends were continually urging me to believe and I should be saved. Upon close examination I found that I did believe every truth in the Bible; yet this did not bring a sense of justification. And I durst not think that God was reconciled to me, when I was conscious of the contrary. But the Lord soon brought me out of this dilemma, by showing me that to forgive was His prerogative, and to believe was my duty. This believing for salvation I found was a distinct thing from believing I was saved: I found it implied the lifting up of my heart to the Lord in fervent prayer, looking to Him with a single eye and steady aim; without evil

reasonings or vain wanderings; leaving to Him with all my strength, casting my soul upon His mercy, and depending upon His promises.

While I persisted in this, I found I was saved from many evils, and the great blessing I had in view was often near: sometimes I could lay hold on it for a moment, and found peace and joy; but I had been so long habituated to unbelief, that it often rose spontaneously, and overturned all my consolation. I had therefore to renew my efforts hourly, and to rise as speedily as possible from every fall. In this exercise I continued about two months. Many times I lost my way by too scrupulously regarding the experience of others; yet I had never found anything like despair, unless I wilfully reasoned myself into it; nor could I attain to any deep terrors, which were too much insisted on as a necessary branch of conviction. I likewise formed wrong ideas of justification: I wanted some great work to be wrought upon me, that I might have something very remarkable to boast of. And therefore, when the Lord gently drew near, and manifested His peace in a small degree, I rejected it with displeasure. I even contended with the Lord, till He strongly impressed upon my mind these words: "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." I was now convinced of the necessity of receiving with thankfulness the smallest tokens of the Divine favour; and that I must suffer, with child-like simplicity, the Lord to lead me in His own way. This was soon followed by a clear manifestation of pardoning mercy, that excluded all

doubts, temptations, and fears, accompanied with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I continued praising a reconciled God for some days. The happiness I felt carried me above every difficulty. I could discern and reject the first approach of temptation. I now thought my mountain was so strong, I should never be moved. I did not know that I should meet with war any more. Indeed, I expected to go right forward to heaven in a short time. My mind had been so intensely engaged in seeking pardon, that I had quite forgot there was a further work of grace to be wrought in me. But the Lord did not suffer me to remain long under that mistake: He soon discovered the remains of the carnal mind, and the necessity of its removal. I had scarcely begun earnestly seeking after that blessing, before the tempter returned with double rage. I saw an invaluable privilege before me, but the way was difficult; a thousand arguments were presented to discourage my pursuit.

Once I lost the peace of God by attending to a discourse which set justification exceedingly high, confounding it with full sanctification. Viewing myself in this false glass, and not finding I had all the marks which the preacher said belonged to one born of God, I fell into the snare of Satan, gave up my shield, and suffered myself to be persuaded that all I had experienced of the goodness of God was a mere delusion. For some hours I was in as deep distress as I had ever known; and I saw no way to escape but by returning to the Lord in faith; who then discovered and broke the snare.

I had suffered much by evil reasonings on many occasions; but now I was determined to use double vigilance against them. Yet the enemy suggested

to me, "Thou mayest now take thy time : thou art a child of God ; and if once in Christ, always in Christ. As for full sanctification, it will be accomplished some time or other ; perhaps in the article of death. God has begun the work, and He will finish it ; therefore take thy ease, and enjoy thy present comfort." But I saw, whether these were true or false arguments, yet the conclusion was deadly. Therefore I rejected the suggestions with all my might, and determined to be wholly devoted to God.

In the midst of great exercises of mind, through manifold temptations, I omitted no opportunity of exhorting all about me to flee from the wrath to come. God was pleased to smile upon my weak endeavours, and to make me instrumental in the conversion of several. Afterwards I was convinced I ought to act in a more public manner : but I saw the danger of being too forward as well as of being too backward, and was enabled to keep from both extremes. When an opportunity offered of giving an exhortation in any of the neighbouring societies, I did it with much fear and trembling ; but I durst not shun the cross. Indeed, I laboured under great disadvantages. Through a natural impediment in my speech, I could not easily pronounce several words ; and it was a considerable time before I could conquer, or substitute others in their place. I hoped my acquaintance with authors on most subjects might be of some use to me ; but I was greatly mistaken : my mind was in a situation that forbade all kind of meditation. If I attempted any such thing, I was instantly filled with my old deistical ideas again. I was therefore necessitated to stay my thoughts upon the Lord, and to follow His light and truth as they shone upon me. What knowledge I

had acquired while in the spirit of apostasy from God, I was obliged to throw away, as altogether useless.

After some time, a scene opened which was both painful and profitable. We took an old chapel in a neighbouring village, the inhabitants of which, in general, differed very little from the savage Indians. Here I frequently preached to large congregations, and met with plenty of persecution for my pains; but it was not unexpected, and I was determined to stand it, though it should cost me my life.

One time a Popish gentleman hired some men to pull me out of the pulpit. Though I was ignorant of their design, I providentially fixed my eye on them as soon as they came in. They were confounded, and stayed peaceably till the service was over. Sometimes the mob revenged themselves on the door and windows, throwing whatever came next to hand; and then followed us through the street with mire and dirt. At an adjoining village, where I was to preach, some had engaged a madman; and, to qualify him more perfectly for the work, had made him drunk. He came armed with a large club, and raging in a most furious manner. I was waiting calmly for the event, when the man's wife came, and, having endeavoured in vain to persuade him to go away, fell into violent fits. Seeing this, he instantly became as quiet as a lamb, and we returned without the least injury.

Soon after, I entered into the most afflicting dispensation I had ever known, which continued three months. I gradually sunk into unaccountable anguish of mind, as if the powers of darkness surrounded me without intermission. Sometimes such a horror penetrated my whole soul as if I had committed

some atrocious crime, and was instantly to stand before the great Judge to receive the sentence of eternal damnation. Very often I expected instant death; my whole frame seemed just dissolving. In the midst of all, I found the grace of God was sufficient to support me under it; my conscience was free from condemnation; and I saw this distress was partly natural, and partly diabolical. I still kept cleaving to the Lord, and staying my mind upon Him: the cloud broke, and my former peace returned. I found something daily dying within me; but what it was I could not tell. When I was at the lowest, I began to rise again, and continued increasing in the life of God for three months more. I was then one evening meeting my band, when the power of the Lord descended in an uncommon manner, and I believed He had purified my heart. At first I rejected it through a sense of my unworthiness; but the witness again returned. I considered, "What have I either done or suffered, that could induce the Lord to show me this great mercy?" And I was upon the point of giving up again, when it occurred to my mind, "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." I was then constrained to acquiesce, and said, "Since it is so, I will hold fast if I can."

The next morning I awoke in such power and peace as I had never known; and the promises in the latter part of the thirtieth chapter of Ezekiel were applied in such a manner as left no doubt but the Lord had wrought that great change in me. Nevertheless it was not in the manner I expected. I supposed a soul saved from all sin would be a great, wise, and glorious creature; whereas I found myself

infinitely little, and mean, and base : I had such a discovery of my own nothingness, as humbled me to the dust continually. I felt myself as ignorant and helpless as an infant, and knew I could not stand a moment without the Divine aid. Nor did I find such overflowing joys as I expected, but only an even permanent peace, which kept my heart in the knowledge and love of God.

Meantime several scriptures were opened to me at once ; and I found a delightful relish for the whole. But still I found knowledge in Divine things was to be acquired gradually, through patient labour ; and that even this was limited : God giving no more than was necessary, and at such times as He pleased.

I walked in this liberty some months, till one day I met with a circumstance which grieved me. I attended too much to the temptation, and was not inwardly watchful ; so, before I was aware, the temptation took place in my heart, and I found myself angry for a moment or two. As I never expected to feel this evil any more, my distress was inconceivable for three or four hours ; the enemy suggesting that I was now an apostate from the pure love of God, and could never be restored. I cried mightily to the Lord, and He discovered the device of the enemy, and healed the wound that had been made. He likewise showed me, that as I had received Christ Jesus, so I must walk in Him ; that the same faith by which I entered into rest must be continued, in order to be established in that liberty.

The Conference being at Leeds, in the year 1762, I attended with a design of being edified by the public discourses and private conversation of the preachers. And herein I had abundant reason to be satisfied. Mr. Wesley's sermons were in a peculiar

manner calculated for establishing me in what I had lately experienced. During the Conference it appeared there wanted several more preachers as itinerants in different Circuits. My friends proposed me for one, and asked if I had any objection. As I was resigned to any station Providence seemed to point out, I submitted to the judgment of my brethren. Being admitted on trial, I returned home to settle my affairs; and in the latter end of February, 1763, I went into the Dales Circuit.

When I got to Darlington, the town was in an uproar, occasioned by George Bell's prophecy. That day, according to his prediction, the world was to be destroyed. Many people were much frightened; but their fears soon gave place to resentment, and they threatened to pull down the house, and burn the first preacher that came. However, considering that God was all-sufficient, I told Mrs. Oswald, if she would venture the house, I would venture myself. Notice being given for preaching, the place was soon filled with people, rude enough. Providentially I found in the Newcastle paper a paragraph, wherein Mr. Wesley disavowed all connexion with Mr. Bell, and all credit to his prophecy. This I read to the people, which instantly quieted them, and they attended patiently to the end of the meeting. A poor backslider was that night cut to the heart, and roared out in a tremendous manner. But shortly after he found mercy, and died in peace.

In this Circuit I found several societies of sincere people; but many of them were settled upon their lees: those who had obtained justification were resting in their past experience, and had little expectation of being saved from inward sin till death. I spoke strongly of full salvation, and God gave the

word success. Several were stirred up to seek for purity of heart, and others were convinced of sin. Mr. Samuel Meggot, a zealous, pious preacher, was my fellow-labourer, in whom I found the affection of a parent. Meeting me one day in the Dales, he said, "You must make haste to Barnard-Castle: the people are all in confusion; six or seven of them have found full sanctification, and the rest are tearing one another to pieces about it." When I got to the town, I found many were not a little prejudiced against me, as a setter forth of strange doctrines. I attempted to preach among them, but could find no liberty: I met the society, but it was still the same. I was just going to conclude, when in an instant the power of God descended in a wonderful manner. The assembly were all in tears, some praising God for pardoning mercy, and others for purifying grace. And even those who could not yet understand this new doctrine were constrained to say, "If we do not believe it, we will never speak against it any more." The snare of the enemy was effectually broken; and from that time the work spread, not only through the town, but also into the neighbouring societies: we seldom had any meeting, public or private, but some were either convinced, justified, or saved from all sin.

The society in Wear-Dale consisted of thirty-six members. But one Sunday, at two o'clock, the Divine power descended upon the assembly; six persons, one after another, dropped down, and, as soon as they came to themselves, cried out for mercy. The work from that time revived, and spread through different parts of the Dale; and the society was soon doubled in its number, many of whom stand to this day.

In other places, the people were remarkably lively, and many were added to the societies. I continued in this Circuit till July, 1764, having the satisfactory evidence that I was acting in a station suitable to the designs of Providence. This greatly supported me in the various difficulties that unavoidably occurred. Indeed, I exerted myself much above my strength both in preaching and travelling, often venturing in tempestuous weather over those dreary fells when even the mountaineers themselves durst not. I was frequently in danger of being swallowed up in the bogs, or carried away by the torrents. Sometimes I have rode over valleys where the snow was eight or ten feet deep, for two or three furlongs together. When the danger was most imminent, I not only found a calm resignation, but a solid rejoicing in the God of my salvation.

THE following character of Mr. Story was written by his friend Mr. Benson, and adopted by the Conference of 1818 :—

GEORGE STORY. He was an old disciple, and faithful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. His piety was genuine, and uniformly evidenced by a life and conversation unblamable and holy. His views of Christianity, in all its branches, were clear and correct, and his attachment to every part of Methodism steady and uninterrupted. He believed and loved our doctrines, which he considered as being those of the Scriptures; and perfectly approved of our discipline, and took all opportunities of enforcing it. He was received as an itinerant preacher in the year

1762; continued to travel in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland for twenty-nine years: and had many proofs that his labours were attended with success. In the year 1792 he was appointed editor of our Magazine and other publications; and a few years after, superintendent of our printing-office; the duties of which departments he discharged to the satisfaction of the Conference, and to his own credit, until his various infirmities rendered it necessary that he should be released from them. The weakness attendant on age came very gradually upon him, until within a few months of his death; when his strength of body, and the faculties of his mind, decayed apace. His end was peaceful and serene, as his life had been meek, gentle, and temperate. A short time before his death, to a friend, who asked him concerning his prospect into eternity, he said, "I feel Christ to be more precious to my soul than ever."

Mr. Story died May 22d, 1818, in the eightieth year of his age.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. WILLIAM BLACK.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at Huddersfield in Yorkshire, in the year 1760. When I was about six years old, I had serious impressions on my mind; and the thoughts of my state so distressed me, that I frequently said within myself, "O that I were a toad, a serpent, or anything but what I am! O that I had never been born, or else had been greater than God! and then He could not have punished me for my daring sins." I found enmity in my heart rising against the blessed Author of my being; particularly against His sovereignty, holiness, and justice; so that before I was ten years old, had it been in my power, I would have overturned God's throne, and put down the Judge of all the earth.

At this time I lived at Otley, near Leeds, with my uncle. Here I went to school; but was inattentive to my learning, and assiduous in wickedness; particularly fighting, quarrelling, lying, stealing, and disobedience to my uncle. When I was about twelve or thirteen years old, I ran away to my father's, who lived about twenty miles distant. He gave me

a severe correction; but, as he had thoughts of going to North America, he did not send me back to my uncle. O, how I desire at this day to be humbled at the remembrance of these my youthful iniquities, and praise the God of grace who had mercy on my worthless soul!

In the year 1774 my father left England, and went to Nova-Scotia. After going through several parts of the province, he purchased an estate at Amherst, near Cumberland, and in the fall of the year returned. While he was in America, my dear mother paid particular attention to the concerns of my soul. She frequently took me aside into her closet to pray with and talk to me; after relating God's gracious dealings with herself, and affectionately pressing the necessity of the new birth on my conscience. Her godly admonitions were not altogether in vain. Many times they deeply affected me, and sent me in my closet to my knees, where, with tears, I besought the Lord for mercy; which I surely should have found, had I not believed the subtle fiend, who whispered, "It is too soon for you to be religious: it will destroy your happiness, cut off all your pleasures, and make you a laughing-stock for every boy in the school." With this, and such like temptations, he prevailed. I quenched the Spirit of God, and drove away my concern, so that I could sin on nearly as I did before.

In April, 1775, we sailed from Hull, on board the "Jenny," Captain Foster, and had a good passage, until we came within sight of Halifax, where we struck upon the rocks with great violence, and were afraid the ship would be lost; but it being low water when she struck, through mercy, she was got off again without much damage.

Captain Foster was a pattern to mariners, especially to masters of vessels, both with respect to his private walk as a Christian, and his government as a master. I never heard him speak a rash word; nor did I hear a rash oath from the time we left England, until we arrived in Halifax harbour, either by mariner or passenger, although we had about ninety on board. There was religious worship in the cabin constantly, morning and evening, to which the captain invited all to come that could be spared from the management of the vessel. He used to sing and pray with the people, and affectionately to advise and exhort them to make sure of the one thing needful. What pity it is that so few imitate him!

After staying about a fortnight at Halifax, we sailed for Cumberland, and arrived in June. Here I grew in wickedness as I advanced in age, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness; spending whole nights together in the ridiculous practice of shuffling spotted pieces of pasteboard, with painted kings and queens on them; and dancing for four or five nights in the week; until the spring of 1779, when the Lord again began to work upon my mind in a most powerful manner.

A few old Methodists who had emigrated from England some years before, and had retained something of the work of grace in their souls, began to keep meetings amongst themselves for prayer and exhortation. God blessed these means, some being awakened, and several set at liberty; and when this was rumoured abroad, the people began to think and inquire whether these things were so or not.

One day my brother John had been over at Fort-Lawrence, and on his return told me that two of our acquaintances were converted, and knew their sins

forgiven; and that he thought it was high time for him to set out, and seek the same blessing. I replied, "Brother, whether they are converted or not, it is certain we must alter our course of life, or we cannot be saved." He said, he intended to do it. But said I, "Let us determine to set out now; and, lest we should be drawn back, let us covenant together." We did so, and shook hands, as a confirmation of the same. Yet, as our conviction was not deep, this covenant chiefly respected outward things; as the leaving off card-playing, dancing, Sabbath-breaking, &c., and resolving to attend the meetings, to read, and to pray, &c.

About this time I went over to Mr. Oxley's, (whose family were under concern for their souls,) who exhorted me to set out with all speed to seek God, and not to rest until my peace was made with heaven. This was a great blessing to me, as it strengthened me in my determinations.

One night, at our request, John Newton of Fort-Lawrence came over to Amherst to pray with us. While he was giving out the hymn, the tears began to gush out of my eyes, and my heart to throb within me; so that in a little time most of the company did so too. One young man at first began to laugh at us, and thought within himself, "These never committed murder, or did any dreadful thing, that they need to make such fools of themselves, and roar out that way like mad people." But God soon turned his laughter into sorrow, and sent an arrow of conviction to his heart; and then he roared out the loudest of all, "God be merciful to me, a poor miserable sinner!" Ten or eleven continued crying thus for some time, when God graciously set Mrs. Oxley at liberty. Her soul was brought out of

dismal darkness into marvellous light. O, how did her soul exult in the Lord her Redeemer, and magnify His holy name! Our meeting continued that night for several hours; after which, I went home with my three brothers and a sister, weary and heavy laden with the burden of our sins.

From this time, we met almost every night at Mr. Oxley's, to sing and pray, for some months together. We generally met a little after sunset, and continued our meetings until midnight; indeed, frequently I and the young man before-mentioned continued until daylight. I now wept, fasted, and prayed, and my constant cry was, "Give me Christ! Give me Christ! or else I die." I could bear to hear of nothing beside Jesus, and Him crucified; and was amazed to see men, endowed with reason, and capable of enjoying God's love in time and eternity, spending their precious moments in the most trifling and unprofitable conversation.

One night coming from a religious meeting with two or three young men, whilst the northern lights began to wave backwards and forwards in the air, I thought, "What, if the day of judgment be coming? I am ill prepared to die!" Then, throwing myself on the ground, I cried to the Lord to have mercy on my poor, wretched, sinful soul. While lying on the ground, this thought was impressed upon my mind: "The curse of God hangs over prayerless families. God is not worshipped in a public manner in your family: this is your sin." This had for some time lain heavy on my mind, and that of my brother John. He had several times been requested to pray with us, but always put it off, saying, "By and by I will, when I get more strength." But still he could not break through. I rose from the ground, and went

immediately home, resolving in myself, that if neither my father nor elder brother would pray with the family, I would. Just as I entered the door, my brother began to pray; which was the first time we had family prayer since my mother died, in 1776.

Soon after this, Mr. Wells came over to Amherst, and gave an exhortation, in which were these words, "Sin and repent, ~~sin and~~ repent, until you repent in the bottomless pit." They went like a dagger to my heart. "Lord," thought I, "I am the very man. I sin and grieve, and then I sin again. Alas! what will such repentance avail? I must be holy, or I cannot be happy." Now my sins were set in array before me. I saw and felt myself guilty, helpless, wretched, and undone. I went about from day to day, hanging down my head like a bulrush, whilst streams of tears rolled down my cheeks; yet still I found no deliverance. However, I was determined never to rest until I found rest in Christ. None of the externals of religion would now satisfy my awakened conscience. I saw that if ever I was saved, it must be by grace through faith; and that this faith was the gift of God: but, alas! I had it not; nor was I yet brought wholly to trust in the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

Soon after this, I went to hear an exhortation at a neighbour's house: but, alas! I felt hard and stupid; all my softening frames were gone. (Perhaps I trusted too much in them.) I could not shed a tear, if it would have saved my soul from hell. I thought, "Surely I am one of the vilest wretches on the face of the earth. I know that I am a child of the devil, of wrath, and hell; and dying here, I am for ever undone; yet I cannot shed a tear. Alas, alas! I am worse and worse! more wretched

than ever!" In this miserable state I laid me down, concluding I was farther from deliverance than ever. I mourned because I could not mourn; and grieved because I could not grieve.

The day following, we had our monthly meeting at Mr. Foster's, of Fort-Lawrence. Such a day as this I never saw before or since. Mr. Wells's prayer seemed just suited to my case. Every word came home with keen conviction, and sunk deeper into my heart than ever. I formerly used to long that I might feel my sins a greater burden, and that my distress might be increased. I mourned because I had so little sense of my state. I was greedy of sorrow; to mourn was pleasing, and to shed tears was some relief. But now the scene was changed, and my sins were an intolerable burden. I was weary of life, and strangely said within myself, "I wish I was dead. If God pleases to save me, it is infinite mercy: if He damns my soul, be it so, He is righteous and just; I cannot help myself." Everything augmented my sorrows. A cock, just then crowing, brought strongly to my mind Peter's denial of his Master, so that I cried within myself, "O, I am wretchedly denying the Lord a place in my heart: I, like Peter, have denied the Lord." The enemy then softly whispered, "Go and hang thyself." But God of His infinite goodness (though He did not yet deliver me) preserved my soul from self-destruction, blessed be His name for ever!

Meeting being over, John Newton came to me, and said, "Surely, Willy, there must be something that thou art not willing to give up, or the Lord would have delivered thy soul before now!" I replied, "I am in Francis Spira's condition." "No, no," said he: "only give up all thy soul to Jesus, and

He will soon deliver thee. Sorrow may continue for a night, but joy shall come in the morning." Thus he endeavoured to encourage me to look for relief, while he pressed me to surrender up all my soul to Jesus Christ, assuring me I should find deliverance the moment I cast all my soul on Jesus. My distress was so great, I thought if I was in hell I could not be much worse. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" Soon after, the extremity of my distress went off, and I remained for two days melancholy, under an abiding sense of my lost condition, except the Lord should, in infinite mercy, send me help from His holy place. On the evening of the latter day, I went to Mr. Oxley's, where a woman who knew my distress asked me, "Can you believe?" I answered, "No." She said, "You are reasoning with the enemy. Come, I have got a sweet promise for you;" and then showed me a passage in the Bible, which she supposed suitable to my case. I said, "I have seen many such sweet promises as that to-day; but, alas! they are not for me."

Mr. Frieze then came to me, asked the state of my mind, and went to prayer. He took an affectionate leave of me, saying, "I believe God will deliver you before morning." We tarried still at Mr. Oxley's, singing and praying for about two hours, when it pleased the Lord to reveal His free grace; His fullness and suitableness, as a Saviour; His ability and willingness to save me: so that I was enabled to venture on the sure mercies of David, and claim my interest in His blood, with, "I am Thine, and Thou art mine;" while our friends were singing,

"My pardon I claim,
For a sinner I am,
A sinner believing in Jesus's name."

Now I could lay hold of Him, as the hope set before me, "the Lord my righteousness." My burden dropped off; my guilt was removed; condemnation gave place to mercy; and a sweet peace and gladness were diffused through my soul. My mourning was turned into joy, and my countenance, like Hannah's, was no more heavy. After tarrying some time, and returning public thanks, I went home with my heart full of love, and my mouth full of praise. The next morning my brother John came to inquire how I felt my mind. I said, "O, blessed be God, I am happy: He hath graciously delivered my soul, and makes my heart to rejoice in His name." He went and told my brother Richard, who soon after came to inquire as he had done: but I did not feel so clear an evidence as before, and began to question whether I had indeed found the Lord; whether the peace and comfort I had felt might not be from the devil. I soon after took up Mr. Hervey's Meditations; and while reading a little in them, God smiled again on my soul, and cheered my heart as with the new wine of His kingdom. My scruples now were all removed, and I could again cry, with joy, "My Lord, and my God!"

That night, when a few friends met at my father's for prayer, I was much comforted in singing those words,—

"But this I can tell,
He hath loved me so well
As to lay down His life to redeem me from hell."

Now I concluded my mountain was so strong, that it could not be moved; but, what are we, if God for a moment hide His face? In the evening we went to Mr. Oxley's; where seeing many in tears and great distress, I said, "O that ye would all come to

Christ! Surely ye may all now believe, if ye will: it is easy to believe." But it was instantly suggested with great violence into my mind, "You are deceived; you are puffed up with pride." This came with such force, that it blasted all my evidences and comforts in a moment, so that I cried out, in the presence of them all, "O, what a wretch am I! I said a few minutes ago, Ye may all believe, if ye will; and now I myself cannot believe." I left the house, went into the field, and, throwing myself on the ground, cried to the Lord for help. He heard my prayer; He saw my distress; filled my soul with love, and bade me go in peace. Lord, what a wavering, inconstant soul am I! Sometimes I feel Thy love; I behold Thy fulness; I see Thee altogether lovely, and cry, "Now I will never doubt again." But, alas! no sooner does the storm come on, the winds blow, the waves run high, than I begin to doubt; and the more I doubt, the more I sink; and I should perish altogether, if Thou didst not reach to me Thine arm, as Thou didst once to sinking Peter. However, these temptations served to confirm me the more; for always proportionable comforts followed them: if my distresses were great, my deliverance was the greater. This, I find, hath been the case with me unto the present day.

For some time after this I was peculiarly blessed. I went on my way rejoicing, carried as in the bosom of my Redeemer.

"Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song.
O that all His salvation might see!
He hath loved me, I cried,
He hath suffer'd and died,
To redeem such a rebel as me.

“ On the wings of His love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain ;
I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again.”

Everything conspired to make me happy. If I looked upon the heavens above, or the earth beneath, both sparkled with their Creator's glory; and all creation seemed to smile on my soul, and speak its Maker's praise. My heart glowed within me, while the fields broke forth into singing, and the trees clapped their hands. The glory of Lebanon was given unto them, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, because of the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Whether I looked on man or beast, I saw the wisdom, power, and goodness of God shine conspicuously. I was filled with wonder and felt the greatest tenderness and love for every creature God had made. With glowing admiration, my soul beheld, and with grateful praise I confessed, the inimitable skill of His all-creating hand in the formation of a fly, or the paintings of a flower. More especially, when I considered, “This is not barely the work of a God, but of *my* God! my Father! and my Friend!” When I thought of death, judgment, heaven, or even hell, it filled my heart with comfort. But above all, at the name of Jesus, my heart took fire, kindled into love, and ardently longed to be with Him. In this happy frame I continued for some time.

When walking out one day, I began to reason with the enemy, or accuser of the brethren, who suggested, “Your joy is not the joy of the Holy Ghost: you deceive yourself: it is self-made, for you can

rejoice when you please. If Jesus, heaven, or hell is but mentioned or thought of, you instantly rejoice. Ah! it is only your passions that are a little moved: you are no Christian still." This temptation appeared so plausible, that it threw me into many doubts and fears; nor could I then command my former joys, as my tempter insinuated. But I cried to the Lord, and He helped me; so that again I could rejoice with confidence in Jesus, as the Lord my Saviour, the Lord my righteousness.

At another time the tempter suggested that question, "Is there any God?" with such power, that I do not wonder St. Paul should exhort us above all things to take the shield of faith, that therewith we may be able to quench the fiery darts of the devil. However, I rejected the thought with abhorrence; but then it soon followed, "You are no Christian, or such a thought could never have entered your mind. You surely are not born again." With such suggestions I was led sometimes to reason to my hurt. I did not always consider, it is no sin to be tempted, unless we make the temptation our own by giving place to it.

Some days after, a blasphemous suggestion against the being of God struck me as if it had been lightning from heaven; but I cried aloud, "Lord, help me!" and it vanished in a moment. One day, beginning to reason, whether a child of God could ever meet with such suggestions and temptations as I did, until my mind was perplexed and clouded, I was sweetly relieved by these lines:—

"My Saviour doth not yet appear,
 He hides the brightness of His face;
 But shall I therefore let Him go,
 And basely to the tempter yield?
 No, in the strength of Jesus, no,
 I never will give up my shield."

At another time the accuser struck at my sincerity thus : " After all your profession, you are only a hypocrite still : you pray much ; so do hypocrites : you are very exact in all you do ; are not they, touching the law, blameless ? " But I have faith. " You think so ; and do not they ? " But I have power over sin. " They suppose they have, but deceive themselves, as you do. " But I have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. " So you conclude ; but there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, who are not cleansed from their filthiness. " But the love of God, and the joy of the Holy Ghost, are shed abroad in my heart. " Many have thought so, and yet were deceived : Herod heard John gladly, and did many things : the stony-ground hearers received the word with joy, " &c. Thus all my evidences were disputed, as fast as I could produce them. I went into an adjacent field, and, throwing myself on the ground, cried, " O Lord God Almighty, Thou that searchest the heart and triest the reins of the children of men, search and prove me ; see if there be any wicked way in which I go. Lord, Thou knowest all things ; Thou knowest that I would love Thee with all my heart. If I am deceived, if I do not love Thee, O my Lord, show it unto me. " My appeal was scarcely gone from my lips ; yea, while I was yet speaking, He lifted up the light of His countenance, and answered in the joy of my soul. In His light, I saw light, and could not doubt either God's love to me, or my love to God. O, what a blessing it is to have a throne of grace so free of access !

When I first set out in the ways of God, I thought if I was once converted, I should never feel the least evil desire, wandering of thought from God, or

aversion to duty. I concluded, sin will be all destroyed, and I shall know war no more. But how mistaken! I found my conflicts were just beginning; or myself but newly entered on the field of battle. O, what a depth of wickedness I found still in my heart! what a den of thieves, a cage of unclean birds, a nest of corruption, pride, self, unbelief, love of the world, aversion to duty! all loathsome to behold, and contrary to the will of that God whom in my soul I loved. Yet, blessed be God, they had not the dominion over me. The moment they were discovered, my soul rose in indignation against them, fled to the atoning blood, and looked to heaven for deliverance. I hated, I abhorred them as the spawn of hell; so that they did not break my peace. I still held fast the beginning of my confidence, and felt the Spirit of the Lord bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. But a view of these things greatly humbled me, and showed me the continual need I had of Jesus Christ. It sent me often to Calvary with this cry,

“Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of Thy death.”

I never had a greater sense of my vileness, or so great a love to Jesus. Never did sin appear so odious, or grace in so lovely a view before. Jesus, in His various names, characters, and offices, appeared lovely, yea, altogether lovely. His presence sweetened everything; so that now I could sing,—

“With me no melancholy void,
No moment lingers unemploy’d,
Or unimproved below;
Our weariness of life is gone,
Who live to serve our God alone,
And only Him to know.”

My days did sweetly glide away. I could see, or feel, or taste God in everything. The eating a little bread, or the drinking a little water from a brook, hath many times filled my soul with wonder at His goodness, in feeding such a worthless, hell-deserving creature as I was. God's ordinances now became delightful to me. I went up to His house with joy, and entered His courts with praise. His people now were my dearest and only companions. They were the excellent of the earth, in my view, though perhaps clothed in rags. I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go up to the house of God." Sabbath-days, formerly the most burdensome, became the most delightful days in all the year. I fed on marrow and fat things. I was sorry when the Sabbath was over, or longed for the return of the next. I saw time was exceedingly precious: I longed that it should be all filled up for God; and was determined to have opportunity for prayer, though I should take it out of meal-times.

While I thus happily went on, I was assaulted with many temptations, out of which the Lord delivered me; one of which I will relate. One day, while I was at work, a sudden thought was darted into my mind, "Is there any God? I wish there was no God!" This horrid injection surprised me. I scarcely knew my own voice from that of the fiend. However, when the enemy comes in with a flood, the Spirit lifts up a standard against him. I cried, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I not only believe in Thee, but love Thee, and rejoice that Thou art mine." By the grace of God, I was preserved, so that Satan gained no advantage hereby. His temptations were rather a blessing to me, as they made me seek after the continual

presence of God. I could not rest one moment without feeling His love; which He in mercy graciously bestowed upon me, from day to day. I set the Lord always before me, and almost continually adverted to His presence, both in speaking and acting.

In the evenings I frequently walked out to meditate on God's goodness, and the works of His hands. O, how often hath my soul been filled with wonder and admiration! I felt a peculiar love to souls, and seldom passed a man, woman, or child without lifting up my heart to God on their account; or passed a house without praying for all in it, that God would open their eyes, give them to see the miseries of a natural state, and make them partakers of His love. It grieved me from day to day to see them so ignorant of themselves, of happiness, and of God; so that sometimes I was constrained to speak to them, though I met with rough treatment in return.

Most of our family were soon after converted to God; and O, what a blessed change did religion now make among us! Before its blessed influences were known in our family, nothing but discord, jealousy, and ill-will were there. Peace had for some time left our dwelling, and we, hurried on by devilish passions, were urging fast to ruin. But when religion once spread her benign influences over us, our jars ceased, peace returned, and harmony and love reigned in the whole family. So that my father, once speaking to a person very much prejudiced against religion, said, "Madam, you may say what you please against religion; but I would not for three hundred pounds, it should have missed coming into my house, even on a temporal account. And sure I am, whatever others may think, that those are the

happiest people under heaven, who love God, and bear the Redeemer's cross."

I now longed vehemently that all should know the sweetness and preciousness of Christ. I had a feeling sense of their unhappy condition, as strangers to the grace of God, and could scarcely refrain from weeping over them. I loved them so, that I thought I could willingly have sacrificed my life on a gibbet, if that would have been a means of bringing them to the knowledge of themselves and of Jesus Christ. One evening, when we met at St. Lawrence, I gave vent to the fulness of my heart, and entreated them by the mercies of God, and the preciousness of their own souls, not to quench the Spirit, and destroy themselves eternally. Soon after this we had meetings at Amherst. Here also the love of Christ, and the love of souls, constrained me to beseech them in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God. My heart seemed to melt down while I spoke, and tears flowed from my eyes.

I now began to pray and exhort at almost every meeting; and God was with us of a truth, but to convince and to comfort. We seldom met together, but the shout of a King was heard in our camp. I found the Lord graciously stood by my weakness, and His Spirit helped my infirmities; so that many times, though my body trembled, and my knees smote one against another, yet God delivered me from these fears, so that I could speak with confidence, freedom, and tender affection.

In the winter following, being invited to go over to Tantremar, and give a word of exhortation, I did so; and God sent the word with power to the hearers' hearts. From that time an awakening began. Many, both young and old, inquired the way to Zion, and

afterwards believed in Jesus. Three other young men and I agreed to visit in our turns, every Sabbath-day, Prospect, St. Lawrence, and Amherst. The word did not fall to the ground in vain; for in every place God gave us to see the fruit of our labours. We met with little opposition, except by hard names, (which were plentifully bestowed upon us, both by the Pharisees and Sadducees,) and being once taken prisoners to the garrison, where after we had been detained two hours, they set us at liberty. The work still went on with greater swiftness during the winter, and many found the word to be the power of God unto salvation.

In the spring following we were visited by a young man from Falmouth, who was very zealous in the cause. He laboured fervently, and at his first coming was made a great blessing to many. After staying about seven or eight weeks, he returned; but, before he left us, proposed that we should give up the Methodist discipline, and form ourselves into a Congregational church. This the people could not consent to do. He soon sent another, who preached amongst us for some time; but, alas! he sowed dissension, and poured out a flood of the rankest Antinomianism, which afterwards produced dismal fruits. At the time he came, we had about two hundred in the society, which met regularly in the classes; and about one hundred and thirty of them professed faith in Jesus. He tarried about a month with us. Several of the friends, beside myself, reasoned with him on the evil tendency of his doctrines; but all in vain. At last, ten of the principal friends wrote him a letter; in which they informed him, that if he continued to preach such doctrines, they could not in conscience hear him. The letter did not reach his

hand ; but he never returned to Cumberland since. Yet though he was gone, his doctrines took root and spread, and soon after tore the society into pieces.

I took a tour up the river Petitcodiac, and spoke to the people of the goodness of God, and the way of salvation through faith ; but they remained in general hard and stupid. However, the word did not wholly fall to the ground, one being then awakened, and the next time I visited the river, set at liberty. It was up this river where I first ventured to take a text, to prevent a sameness in my discourses. After my return, I continued as usual, working at my father's in the day-time, and in the evening and on the Sabbath-days exhorting and preaching at different places, according as it suited the people best. One night, having called at a friend's house, where a number of those that were awakened had got together, a hymn-book being put into my hand, I gave out a verse, and began to expound it. One of those that had been under great distress began to praise God, and to tell what He had done for her soul. Soon after another and another, till four that night professed redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ. I continued to labour at home until November 13th, when I set off again, to visit the poor, hardened people of Petitcodiac river, and laboured amongst them until the 20th. I preached to them sixteen or seventeen times, and perceived the word reached their hearts, as appeared from their heaving breasts and weeping eyes. At Hillsborough, and also at the village, many were pricked to the heart, and began to inquire the way to Zion, in a manner they had never done before. One cried vehemently for mercy, who had just before been mocking. The word fastened on his mind, so

that he was ready to cry out, but left the house to avoid it: soon after he returned, and found it to have the same effect. He attempted to leave the room as at the first, but before he reached the door, was constrained to cry out for mercy.

On the 21st I returned to Tantremar, and preached in the evening with very great freedom. Jesus was in the midst of us, both to wound and to comfort; and many of the friends were remarkably happy. One little girl about seven or eight years old got upon a form, and told, in a wonderful manner, what God had done for her soul. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He can and does perfect praise. After preaching several times at Tantremar, on the 26th I rode over the marshes, and on the 28th, by God's blessing, arrived safe at home, having found this a blessed journey to my soul.

I laboured about home as usual, and for about six weeks was sorely grieved to see the enemy likely to gain so great an advantage. Antinomianism now began to rear its dreadful head. The commandments of God, more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, were dressed up as scarecrows. God's law was, by many, rather vilified, than magnified and made honourable. To press it on the consciences of our audience was looked upon as a mark of our ignorance, if not of our being total strangers to the grace of God. All this they did under pretence of honouring free grace; and taught publicly, that no believer could make shipwreck of his faith; that his soul never sinned, though he should lie or get drunk; that David himself, or his soul, never sinned, while in Uriah's bed,—it was his body only. Thus were the flood-gates of iniquity set open; and many sucked in the poison, as if it had been the marrow of the

Gospel. So that some of my own children rose up against me, even those that once loved me as the apple of their eye. Yea, even two of our leaders, and many of our principal members, were drawn away by these corrupt notions. Hence dissensions arose; their zeal was spent upon notions and opinions, and the life of God gradually died away.

January 9th, 1782.—I set off for Petitecodiac river, and stopped the first night at a place where I found one whom I had left in great distress, now rejoicing in the Lord. The next morning I set forwards on snow-shoes, for the French settlement on the north side of the river, in company with one or two of our friends. We lay at a French house that night on a little straw, and had only about two yards of a thin linen wrapper to cover us, though it was one of the coldest nights in all that winter. But

“Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here!”

The next day we went forward, and walked about nineteen miles. I was much fatigued with the snow-shoes; yet I preached in the evening, but felt little life in my own soul. O Lord, what are we without Thy love? Sunday, 12th.—I preached at the village, where many were deeply affected, and, with floods of tears, declared they sought the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world. After preaching, I walked about nine miles to the head of the river, where we met a small company in the evening. The next day I preached twice; and the day following returned to the village again, where I found some fruit of my labours.

Wednesday, 16th.—We walked as far as Ricars-point, where I preached in the evening; but the

people appeared quite unmoved. On Thursday we reached Hillsborough, where we were received with joy. Many appeared to be in sore distress, and one found comfort. Monday, 21st.—I walked about twenty miles on snow-shoes, and preached at night. Many were deeply affected; and one in particular cried, “O, Mr. Black, what shall I do? my heart is ready to burst.” I pointed him to Jesus, and exhorted him to believe. Others declared what God had done for their souls; and many hung around, ready to catch every word, and some with tears crying, “O that I might receive my sight! O that my eyes were opened! What shall I do? My heart is almost broken!” &c.

Wednesday, 23d.—I preached at the village, and, having left the people weeping, went on my journey. At night I preached at a friend’s house, where a young man trembled greatly, and cried, “O Lord, if Thou dost not save, I am undone!” About bed-time I went out of the house to the barn, where I found him kneeling on the snow, crying and praying in the bitterness of his soul. The next morning we commended him to the grace of God, and set off for Membromcook, where we tarried all night amongst the French again, and the next day reached Mr. Weldon’s. Saturday, 26th.—About one o’clock I arrived at Sackville; but found a proud, barren heart, many times wandering from God. O my God, I hate this self, and will not give up my claim to Thee. Sunday, 27th.—I preached twice, but felt great cause to mourn my barrenness, my distance from, and unlikeness to, Jesus.

I next visited the societies around Cumberland as usual, for about six weeks, and then returned to the river again, where I found all were walking steadily

according to their profession. On April 3d I got safe to Membromcook, after a dangerous passage across the bay. Had my Master been pleased to have called me then away, I was well reconciled to a watery grave; for I knew that I had a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. On the 9th I arrived at Cumberland, and continued in my old Circuit until the 22d of May, when I set off for Windsor, and on the 25th got safe to Cornwallis. On the Lord's day I preached three times; and whilst some wept, and others greatly rejoiced, I had such a sense of my unworthiness, that I appeared to myself as the chief of sinners. If conscience did not prevent, I believe I should yet give up preaching. Lord, let me not fall by the hand of Sau! !

Wednesday, 29th.—I visited a sick woman who thought she had a great stock of good deeds to build upon. I endeavoured to convince her of the necessity of the new birth; but all in vain. I offered to pray with her, but she refused. I then exhorted her to consider the dreadful state of her soul, and left her. O Lord, pity her benighted soul!

June 4th.—I rode on to Falmouth, and preached in the evening. Many of Mr. Alleine's friends were there. They felt the power of the word, and rejoiced greatly, declaring it was the power of God unto salvation. But, though they frequently spoke thus during my first visit, yet after Mr. Alleine had returned from Cumberland the second time, and told them that I had opposed his doctrines, and his design to set aside the Methodist discipline there, the case was changed, and on my second coming they said, I was no minister of Jesus Christ; soon after, I was no Christian; and, in a little while, a downright minister of antichrist. Yet I continued

to act, live, and preach the very same doctrines as before. Lord, what is man? I doubt not, but many of these are good, though mistaken, people, and enjoy the life of religion; yet they do not know their brethren.

June 10th.—I set off for Halifax, where there was scarcely the shadow of religion to be seen. I preached four times amongst them; but the word met with little reception. In general they are Gallio-like, and care for none of those things. I then went and preached at two or three other places; and on the 20th returned to Halifax again, where I tarried five days, and preached six times. Some were now affected, and two backsliders much stirred up: but we had considerable disturbance from the sons of Belial; some of whom threw handfuls of flour about the room, upon the people's clothes; others threw gunpowder crackers into the fire, which flew about amongst the people; and others cursed, and swore that I should not preach long, for the press-gang was coming. I pitied them much, but did not fear them. Father, forgive them! they know not what they do.

July 1st.—At the request of some, who had come about seventy miles to hear the word, I agreed to visit Annapolis. We set off early in the morning, and got to Granville that night; where I tarried about seven days, and had some comfortable meetings. I then rode to Horton, and preached in Magee's barn, where the word was sharp as a two-edged sword. Many trembled exceedingly, and amongst the rest, one who had formerly been a valiant servant of the devil, and confessedly as proud as Lucifer; but now he trembled in every limb, and floods of tears gushed from his eyes. Many saw the

necessity of inward religion, and with strong cries and tears besought the Lord for mercy. In the evening we held our first watch-night at Nathaniel Smith's, in Cornwallis. Such a meeting as this I never saw before, except one at Amherst. O, what a noise and a shaking amongst the dry bones! The cries of the wounded were so great, that my voice could scarcely be heard. When the first meeting was over, I found my strength almost exhausted, and feared I should not be able to preach again. But I found the promise literally fulfilled: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength."

On the 12th I returned to Horton; and the next morning setting off about four o'clock, I reached my father's house the same evening, travelling that day about seventy miles. Blessed be God, this was a comfortable journey to me, seeing seven or eight profess to have found the pearl of great price.

Sunday, 14th.—I preached at Amherst. Whilst I was absent, Mr. Alleine paid the people here a second visit, completed a separation, and drew nearly seventy of our members away from us. All was in confusion; the classes were broken up, and a flood of contention threatened dreadful consequences. O Satan! a wicked man could not have answered thy purpose so well. But may the Lord overrule it for good, and prevent the mischief I dread! O Lord, suffer us not to lose the spirit of religion in the spirit of controversy!

On the 25th a number of the principal friends met together at Mr. D——'s, to consult what was best to be done in our present situation. Several leaders were appointed, and three or four classes formed again. O that the Lord would heal the breaches of Zion!

August 1st.—I set off again to visit the dear people at Petitcodiac. I arrived at Membromcook that night, where we had a comfortable meeting. Here I found one, whom I left on March 4th in sore distress, now rejoicing in God her Saviour. This was a day of sweet refreshment to my soul: so does the Lord regard the unworthiest of all that ever knew His grace or spoke in His name. Alas, what a body of death, what a heap of corruption and deformity, am I! Yet, Lord, I trust I can say, grace (not sin) reigns in me. O, what need have I to live by faith!

“O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!”

Friday, 3d.—I preached at Hillsborough in the forenoon, and in the evening at the village. The day following I preached at the head of the river, and joined a few in society. On the Sabbath we had a comfortable time, when many seemed fully determined to seek God for their portion; but especially on Monday, 6th, while I discoursed on, “Ye ask, and have not, because ye ask amiss.” Many were deeply affected, and some very happy. When the tide served, we went down the river in a canoe, leaving many in tears; and in the evening we arrived safe at Hillsborough, where my heart was made glad by hearing one of the Dutch women tell what God had done for her soul.

Tuesday, 7th.—I preached in the morning, and then set off for Shepody. We had a tedious and dangerous passage: the tide was for us, and the wind high, and right a-head, which meeting the tide, made it both rough and dangerous. The night was very dark, and the men almost spent with rowing. With difficulty we reached Cape-Mosel; yet, blessed

be God, in the midst of breaking waves and foaming surges, I could with confidence sing,

“ I fear no denial, no danger I fear,
Nor start from the trial, while Jesus is near.”

After we got ashore we groped our way about a mile across marshes, until we got into the edge of the woods, where we tarried all night under the shade of the trees, and about day-break set off again, by land, for Shepody, and arrived about eight o'clock. Here I tarried until the 11th. Several appeared affected under the word ; but I fear the work is not deep. Then I set off for Membromcook, and arrived safe at Tantre-mar that night, where I stayed until the 14th. Then I crossed the marshes, and preached at Mount-Whatley in the evening, and at St. Lawrence the next day.

Sunday, 19th.—I received a very pressing letter from Petitcodiac, requesting me to return there if possible immediately, and informing me that my last visit had been made a great blessing ; that now the prejudices of the people began to vanish, and several were under deep concern. I laid the matter before our friends, who thought I ought immediately to return. The next morning I set off, and rode to the English settlement at Membromcook that night, and about ten o'clock the next reached Hillsborough.

Tuesday, 22d.—I preached twice, when deep attention sat on every face, and some wept most of the time. God appears deeply at work. O that they may never quench His Spirit ! The day following I went in a boat, with about twenty other persons, to the village, and preached twice to an affected congregation, where two professed redemption in the blood of Jesus.

Friday, 24th.—We went by water to the head of the river, where also I preached twice ; and about

one o'clock in the morning set off again in our boat. We had not got above a mile or two down the river, before we met a small canoe, with a man, his wife, and a little child in it, who had rowed about twenty miles, to hear the word, but was too late. O gracious Father, let not his labour be in vain! About nine in the morning, I preached again at the village, and met the society afterwards. Truly this was a powerful and affecting time. God set old Mrs. Stieves at liberty, and her mourning was turned into glorious joy. O, how affectingly did she speak of the goodness of God, until all in the room were melted into tears! She was always of a moral character, and had strictly adhered to some of the externals of religion; but saw not the necessity of inward religion. When two of her sons were awakened and joined the society, she opposed, supposing they were deceived; and when Mr. B——, justice of the peace, went up the river, she wrung her hands in great distress, and cried, "O that Black, that Black, he has ruined my two sons! O, he has ruined my two sons!" But some time ago God opened her understanding, and gave her to feel a need of a deeper work. She was then convinced that she was but a poor deluded Pharisee herself, a whited wall, a painted sepulchre; and that she was in a miserable situation, unless her soul was converted. Sore distress and anguish filled her soul, until God in mercy revealed His Son in her heart. Then she willingly joined those whom formerly she looked upon as enthusiasts and fanatics.

About one o'clock, leaving many in tears, we set off with the tide, and arrived at Hillsborough in time for preaching; where one fell to the ground, and some wept bitterly.

Sunday, 26th.—Having to cross the river at high water, which was about twelve o'clock, I preached early in the morning, and again about eleven o'clock, when there was weeping and rejoicing on every side. F. Stieves, who had been under concern for some time, was powerfully delivered in the last prayer. O, what a blessed time! Gladly would I have stayed longer here: but Tuesday was the Quarterly Meeting at Fort-Lawrence; therefore we took an affectionate leave of each other. They accompanied me across the river to the French settlement, where I had left my horse; and I rode that night to Tantremar.

Tuesday, 28th.—In the lovefeast at Fort-Lawrence about fifty declared their desire to continue in the Methodist Connexion. About nine or ten of these had joined Mr. Alleine; but now saw cause to return, and walk in the way in which they were first called, who, together with those at Petitcodiac, amounted to about eighty. Many stood aloof, and would not join either society. O, what a blow did the work in general receive from these unhappy divisions! Satan's maxim is, "Divide and destroy." However, our way is, with meekness and love, to instruct those that oppose.

September 3d.—I set off again to visit the lower towns, and on the 5th I arrived at Windsor. I then visited Halifax, Horton, Cornwallis, Granville, and Annapolis. We had good seasons at each of these places, except Halifax; and even here, two since my last visit professed faith, so that I hope the word did not fall to the ground. These, with a few more, I joined together in society. But in general the people here are hardened. Lord, pity them! Having visited the friends from Halifax to Annapolis, I returned to the Cumberland Circuit again, where I

arrived, after a dangerous passage, on the 14th of November.

Wednesday, 20th.—I rode over to Tantremar, where I was sorely grieved to find mysticism and the foulest Antinomianism spreading like fire, and its deadly fruits already growing up on every side. The people were informed publicly, that they had nothing to do with God's law: that David was still a man after God's own heart, when wallowing in adultery and murder; that his soul never sinned all that time, but only his body. Mr. Alleine himself told several persons one day, that "a believer is like a nut thrown into the mud, which may dirty the shell, but not the kernel." That is, we may get drunk, or commit adultery, without the smallest defilement, &c. O Lord, suffer not the enemy of souls to deceive them thus!

Thursday, 21st.—I rode on to Membromcook, and in the evening went in a canoe to Hillsborough. I tarried near the river about seven days, and had several affecting meetings: two more professed an acquaintance with Jesus; the society were pretty lively; some were under deep concern, and trembled exceedingly under the word.

December 1st.—In speaking on Gal. v. 1, I endeavoured to point out to the people of Tantremar the true Christian liberty; that it did not consist in a liberty to sin with impunity, but a happy liberty to serve God both with our body and with our spirit, which are His.

February 18th.—While I was at Mr. Donkin's, a young man began to talk unscripturally of being led by the Spirit. A woman that was present kindly cautioned him; but it was to no purpose. Like other enthusiasts, he was above being taught by

man, and said he spoke by the Spirit of the eternal God. She replied, "Some are led by another spirit, and not by the Spirit of God: the word of God is the only rule by which we are to try the spirits." After they had talked together for some time, I related the case of George Bell in England, as related in Mr. Wesley's Journal; and also of another person of whom I had heard. It struck him; he threw himself down on the floor, and cried aloud, "I am undone, undone, undone!" I said, "Only seek the Lord, and abide by the testimony of His word: He is still able and willing to save." He then rose from the floor, and sat down on a bench, grinning and grinding his teeth; and appeared evidently to be under the influence of an evil spirit. I fell on my knees by his side, and began to pray; when immediately, as if possessed by a thousand furies, he leaped from his seat, raised up his hands, and scratched me down the back, as if he would have torn off my coat. But when his hand came to the bottom of my back, he could touch me no more. Mrs. D—— caught up her child in her arms, and ran screaming out of the house, leaving him and me alone.

I know not how to describe his various gestures and hideous noises. Sometimes he barked like a dog; then again he would fly round the room, jumping, stamping, and making the most dreadful noises, imitating the Indian powwows, when they invoke the infernal powers. He then roared and screamed in my ears, and shouted in order to drown my voice; mingling with his shouts terms of the most bitter disdain, and execrable blasphemy against Jesus Christ. I found his design was, if possible, to stop me from praying; thinking he should then have power to seize me: but I was peculiarly helped to

wrestle with the Lord, that He would either bind or cast out the evil one. I continued praying until he became quiet as a lamb, kneeled down by me, and began to pray. He told me afterwards, that he was so strongly possessed by the devil, that he wished to tear out my eyes or kill me; but that after his hands came to the bottom of my back, he could touch me no more. Hence we may learn the devil's malice, the prevalence of prayer, and the worth and necessity of our Bibles.

March 29th.—I left Partridge-Island, and crossed in a small boat to Cape Blow-me-down. After a fatiguing journey through mud and water, and having for several hours lost my way, not knowing where to go in the dark, and fully expecting to stay in the woods, I at last found a house, where I tarried all night; and the next day preached at Cornwallis, where many were much comforted.

From this until May 22d I laboured at Horton, Annapolis, Granville, Falmouth, Windsor, and Halifax. I then set sail in a small schooner for La Have, where we arrived the day following, and I preached in the evening. I tarried here about five days, preached eighteen times, and then left some deeply affected.

Wednesday, 28th.—On taking my leave, some friends came with me down to the shore, entreating me to return as soon as possible; and some seemed fully determined to seek God as the portion of their souls. That evening I arrived at Liverpool: the news of my arrival soon spread, so that at half after seven I had about three hundred to hear me. I came here only to get a passage to Halifax; but little did I think what blessed times I was about to see.

June 1st.—The Rev. Mr. Frazer preached twice in the meeting-house, and I preached once. At noon I went to Mr. Smith's, where the people followed me, not willing to lose a word. The house was presently filled; and the Lord was in the midst of us. Many were deeply engaged in seeking salvation. Weeping and rejoicing were on every side: many were exceedingly happy, praising God. Blessed be God for all His kindness to me! O Lord, how do I love Thee, and Thy people!

June 2d.—I preached on the east side of the river; and great was the power of God in the midst of us. Verily God is known in Salem; His name is great in Israel. Great indeed was the noise and shaking of the dry bones. I think there were about fourteen crying out in great distress and anguish of spirit, while others were shouting for joy. Indeed, I never heard more heart-piercing cries and groans, than those of one little girl. O, how did she cry out, for the space of two hours! "What shall I do to be saved? O, my Jesus, my dear Jesus! What shall I do! O, what shall I do to be saved?" These, and such like expressions, were enough to melt a heart of stone, as they dropped from her almost infant lips. Our meeting continued between two and three hours, while shouts of praise and groans of distress might be heard from every part of the room. We had such a time in the evening again at Mr. Dean's, which continued until midnight. Lord, what a day was this! Glory be to Thy name for ever!

June 3d.—I expected to have gone to Shelburne this morning, but the vessel did not sail; therefore I crossed the river to Mr. Smith's, where presently a number of people were gathered. Here also great

was the shaking amongst the dry bones, and there was scarcely a dry cheek in the room. In the evening I preached at the Falls above the town, and God sent the word home to their hearts. It was sharp as a two-edged sword! I have seldom seen such a meeting as this. Numbers were in great distress, groaning, crying, and earnestly pleading for mercy. One gentleman in particular, lately from Stratford, in Connecticut, in New-England, was very grievously wounded. O, how vehemently did he plead for mercy for several hours! Others, again, were filled with consolation. The meeting continued until one o'clock in the morning. Blessed be God, these were reviving days to me, and I could say,

“With me no melancholy void,
No moment lingers unemploy'd,
Or unimproved below;
Our weariness of life is gone,
Who live to serve our God alone,
And only Him to know.”

June 4th.—I received the following note:—
“Edmund Darrow, a stranger to a saving interest in Jesus Christ, begs your prayers to Almighty God for the deliverance of his soul; and should Mr. Black come to New-England, he would be glad to wait upon him at his own house, in the western part of Connecticut.” He soon after found peace with God, and with great zeal exhorted others to seek after the same blessing; and the next year God called him, I trust, to a mansion in heaven.

June 5th.—I set sail for Shelburne, with brother Dean, where we safely arrived on Friday evening; and our hearts were made glad by the sight of some of our friends from New York. These had just sat down in the midst of barren woods; and, as there was

not one house in all the place, they lived in tents. It rained hard most of the night. Brother Barry, in whose tent brother Dean and I stayed, insisted upon our going to bed, and he sat up. The rain beat in upon us during the greater part of the night. The next day I preached to a few of the people, and on Sunday I preached three times. They heard attentively ; but on Monday, 9th, while I was at prayer, one came up in the habit of a gentleman, cursing and swearing that if I did not come down, he would knock me down. He asked, "By what authority do you preach?" and then, turning to the audience, added, "He is nothing but an impostor, and has no authority to preach." I said, "Sir, I have as much authority to preach as you have to swear, and sport with the tremendous name of the great Judge, who will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." "Well, but who sent you?" "Sir, I AM hath sent me unto you." "What, are you God's mouth to this people?" "I am; for it is written, He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that heareth Me heareth Him that sent Me." He went away, uttering dreadful menaces; but presently returned, with two of his companions, sturdy servants of the same master. They came on like mad bulls of Bashan, with mouths full of blasphemy, oaths, and dreadful imprecations, declaring they would tear me down; but the people suffered them not. One of them swore, "I can preach as well as he!" He then leaped on the stump of a tree, (one put a pocket-book into his hand,) and after uttering horrid blasphemy came down. As he came towards me, I addressed him thus: "Friend, I wish you well: my soul pities you: you know that you are fighting against God: your own conscience condemns you.

Remember, you and I must soon stand at the bar of God ; and how, O how, will you meet me there ? ” He seemed to be struck for a time, but soon hardened his heart against God, and belched out a few more oaths, and then left me to finish my discourse without further trouble. During the preaching, a man from the skirts of the congregation threw a stone with great violence ; but as I saw it come, I saved my head, and it just passed by my temples. Blessed be God for His mercy ! This disturbance brought many more to hear. Several appeared to be concerned ; particularly in the evening, while I gave a few words of advice in one of the tents.

Tuesday, 10th.—I preached at Rosaway, when most in the room were in tears, and some cried out, “ What shall I do to be saved ? ” Wednesday, 11th, we sailed for Liverpool ; but did not arrive there until the 19th, by reason of the fog. On my going ashore, I found there was a vessel sailing for Halifax. I proposed going in her ; but our friends would not consent, insisting in the strongest manner, that it was not my duty to go and leave them now. I knew not what to do, as I had already stayed double the time I intended. After praying for direction, being anxious only to do the will of the Lord, I opened my Bible on these words, “ If any man compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain.” I could not say another word, but readily consented ; and that night we had a comfortable time whilst I was preaching.

Saturday, 21st.—I preached twice with great power. In the evening several came to Mr. Smith’s, some of whom were deeply affected, wept and cried for a considerable time. One young woman was very happy, who prayed and praised God in a very

wonderful manner, and exhorted all around to seek an interest in Jesus Christ. Some part of this day I had a sense of God's goodness, and longed to live entirely to His glory; yet I could not find those sweet sensations, and lively views of His goodness and love, that I had formerly felt. O my Lord! give me to love Thee alone; take away every rival; destroy all sin; and let me spend my latest breath in proclaiming Thy love to the fallen sons of Adam. Gladly would I die as soon as my last message is delivered. Death is no terror to me; rather it appears infinitely desirable, when I feel Thy presence.

Sunday, 22d.—I preached three times: three, I trust, found peace with God, whilst others were in deep distress, and many were filled with abundance of consolations. O, what a blessed day! Glory, glory to God, that ever I was born!

Monday, 23d.—I preached at the meeting-house; and on my return I met the Rev. Mr. Cheevers, who said abruptly, "I suppose you think you have been doing good." "Sir," said I, "I hope we have been doing no harm." "Yes, you have been poisoning the minds of the people with doctrines as bad as ratsbane. You are leading them all to hell." "Sir, I pity you, and I will pray for you." "I suppose," replied he, "you do not desire that I should pray for you." I said, "If you can pray in faith, I do; otherwise I do not:" then I bade him a good day, and left him.

Thursday, 26th.—In the forenoon I preached at the Falls; and endeavoured to point out the creature's emptiness, and Christ's fulness. One at this time professed redemption through His blood; and in the evening we had a good time at the town, when another broke out in praise, saying, "Jesus is

precious! O, He is precious! O that all would come, and taste His love!" Another little boy spoke to the same effect. Indeed, many rejoiced, and others wept. After preaching, many went down with me to Mr. Bradford's; and it was midnight before we could part. As I expected to sail for Halifax next morning, I took my leave of this people, and bless God that I ever saw Liverpool.

Friday, 27th.—I set sail for Halifax, and arrived there the next day. After preaching two or three sermons here, I set off for Windsor, on July 1st, and arrived the same night. Here I tarried until the 10th, and had some comfortable times; but a difference between two of our friends has done much hurt. On the 11th I arrived at Cumberland again, where I laboured until the 20th, and then visited my dear children at Petitcodiac river. These are a simple, loving people indeed, happy in God. I preached ten or eleven times among them; and found many Divine consolations, and great refreshments of soul; and then returned to Cumberland. Having rode two or three times round the Circuit, I returned to Windsor, Horton, &c., where I tarried until September 23d.

On the 28th I arrived at Cumberland in a small schooner, and visited all the places round. We had some comfortable times; but found a general declension, at Tantremar in particular. Once it was filled with peace and love, praise and prayer; but, alas! the glory is departed. Our meetings were now flat and dull, and many who began well are like to end in the flesh. Speculative or practical Antinomianism hath bewitched them. O Lord, lay to Thine hand; for men have made void Thy law.

October 20th.—I set off for the island of St.

John's, at the invitation of Mr. B. Chappel ; where I arrived on the 22d, and tarried about a fortnight. I preached several times at Charlotte-Town, and at St. Peter's ; but, alas ! the people in general appeared stupid, and senseless as stones, altogether ignorant of the nature of true religion, and of that faith which worketh by love. On my return from the island, I was exceedingly ill ; but, through grace, not afraid to die. It was my earnest prayer to God, that if my usefulness was done, I might then finish my course, and go to Him whom my soul loved. Blessed be God, death has long since lost his sting and terror. Many times the very thoughts of dying filled my heart with joy : particularly once, when a party of Indians had risen at Miramichi, and taken many of the inhabitants prisoners ; and it was reported they were on their way to destroy all the friends of government at Cumberland. At the news of this, my heart leaped, yea, danced within me for joy, to think that I had a mansion in heaven, a house above their reach, even the bosom of my Redeemer,

“ That palace of angels and God.”

I did not fear those who could only kill the body. After being three days on our passage, and most of the time with little to eat, we arrived at the Bay-Verte. The next day I rode on to Cumberland, and took my Circuit for the winter.

For some time before this, I had had thoughts of marriage. At first I rejected them as a temptation. I had not the least scruple but it was lawful for a minister to marry ; but I feared lest I should do my own will, not the will of God. I prayed again and again, that the Lord would show me His will, and would rather die than offend Him ; and having

advised with my friends, and they approving of my design, I was, on February 17th, 1784, married to Mary Gay, of Cumberland. We both devoted ourselves to the Lord and His service; and, blessed be God, I have no reason to repent of it to this day.

As soon as the spring opened, I set off for the lower towns; and after preaching several times at Windsor, &c., I went to Halifax. Having stayed here some time, and met the classes, one of blacks, and the other of whites, I then went with eight of our friends in a boat to Birchtown; where I preached to about two hundred black people. It is truly wonderful to see what a work God hath been carrying on amongst these poor negroes. Upwards of sixty profess to have found the pearl of great price, within seven or eight months: and what is farther remarkable, the chief instrument whom God hath employed in this work is a poor negro, who can neither see, walk, nor stand. He is usually carried to the place of worship, where he sits and speaks, or kneels and prays with the people.

April 23d.—I met nine of the black classes; (five more remained unmet, for want of time;) and many of them are deeply experienced in the ways of God. There are about one hundred and eight blacks and whites in society at Shelburne and Birchtown.

April 26th.—I set sail for Liverpool, and arrived the next evening. On hearing that I was come, the friends flocked to see me: we had a comfortable evening, and could heartily praise God that He had brought us together again. On the following days, whilst I preached, many were bathed in tears; and some were so filled with a sense of the glory of God, that they said, their mortal bodies could hardly stand under it. O my God, what kindness is this to

mortals! O, how did they rejoice and tell of His goodness! Blessed be God that ever I was made a partaker of these immortal hopes! O, what an infinite fulness is laid up in Jesus! My God, only give me to enjoy Thy sacred smile, a constant sense of Thine approbation and love, and I desire no more :—

“Honours, wealth, or pleasures mean,
I neither have nor want.”

May 2d.—I preached twice, and we had several meetings for prayer and exhortation. The people were much engaged, so that we had scarcely time or inclination to eat. O, what a blessed day was this! Many trembled, wept, and cried for mercy. O that none may ever turn again, as a dog to the vomit!

Monday, 3d.—We had another wonderful meeting. One woman, whose harp had been on the willows for some time, and her soul in captivity, was filled with unspeakable joy. O, how did she praise the Lord for her happy deliverance! This was a glorious time to me. Blessed Lord, let me only taste Thy love, and be employed in Thy service, and it sufficeth me. Once, indeed, I wished that I had never been born, and thought it my greatest misery to have a soul: now I bless Thee for my being, and glory that I am capable of loving Thee.

Wednesday, 5th.—I set sail for Halifax, where having arrived early on Saturday, I set off for Windsor on foot, and travelled forty miles that day; but the skin was so blistered under my feet, that with difficulty I reached Carles's. The next morning I reached Windsor, and preached twice; and after visiting Annapolis, Cornwallis, and Horton, I returned to Cumberland on May 26th. I laboured

here until September 15th, when, after an affecting parting, I set off to visit the States, intending to get some help from our brethren there, as I alone could not take care of all the societies. On my way to Baltimore I called at Boston, where I preached twice: from thence I went by the way of Rhode-Island to New York; where I arrived October 20th, and preached a few times.

I was much exercised here about my temporal circumstances. Satan painted, in lively colours, my distance from home, my money almost gone, my being amongst entire strangers, &c. I could not fully resist this. It followed me even to the pulpit; but there God delivered me, and removed the heaviness from my mind. The first words I opened upon in my Bible were these, "O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt? Look at the lilies," &c. My heart was filled with joy, and I walked in the strength of this promise, not doubting but God would provide.

From New York I went to Long-Island; and on the 29th preached at Black-Stump, the day following at Newtown, and on Tuesday attended the execution of two men that were hung at Jamaica. At the sheriff's desire, I prayed with them, and recommended their souls to God. After travelling two or three days with brother Cox, and preaching at Serrington, Cowharbour, and Huntingdon, I crossed the sound into Connecticut. I preached in the evening at Northwalk, and the next morning rode on to Stratfield. I preached six or seven times amongst the people here, and then returned to New York. During my absence from New York, Dr. Coke had arrived there, and two other preachers from England, and were gone towards Baltimore. There-

fore, on November 17th, I set off for Philadelphia, and thence forward on my way to meet them. December 14th I met Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury. On the 15th the doctor preached and administered the sacrament at the Gunpowder meeting-house. It was a blessed time to me. O my God, I am Thine by a thousand ties, necessary, voluntary, and sacred; houses of worship, woods, fields, and trees have been witness to the sacred vows and engagements that I am under to Thee; and these, when I wilfully and presumptuously sin against Thee, will bring their evidences against me. O my Lord, keep me by Thy powerful grace! O, preserve me Thine for ever!

Friday, 17th.—I rode with Doctor Coke and four other preachers to Perry-Hall, the most spacious and elegant building I have seen in America; and on Saturday, 18th, I left it, and rode on to Hunt's chapel, to relieve brother Whatcoat. This was a day of trials, and, blessed be God, of peculiar comforts too. After preaching at Rioter's-town, and several other places, on Thursday, 23d, I arrived at Baltimore. Friday, 24th, our Conference began; and ended on January 1st, 1785. Perhaps such a number of holy, zealous, godly men never met together in Maryland before. Two preachers, Messrs. Garrettson and Cromwell, were appointed for Nova-Scotia. They set off by way of New York; and I went by water to Hienah, near Barnstable. Here I tarried a few days, and preached six or seven times. The word was attended with power; many were stirred up; and two, a few days after, found peace with God. From hence I went to Hingham, where I found my wife well.

February 1st.—I went to Boston, and tarried there mostly until May, and then sailed for Cum-

berland. When I first arrived here, I preached in private houses, none of the ministers being willing to lend me their pulpits. First I preached in a chamber at the north end of the town; but the people crowded in so that the floor sunk an inch or two. I then preached in a large room at the south end of the town, where in time of prayer one of the beams of the floor broke, and the people screamed, as if going to be swallowed up by an earthquake. After this I preached in Mr. Skillman's meeting-house, two or three times: but this was like to cause a quarrel between him and the committee, who had offered the use of the house; so I declined preaching there any more. We then procured from the "select men" the use of the North Latin school-house: but neither would this contain half the people; and one of the beams here also giving way, the people were terribly afraid, and screamed as if about to be crushed to death. I preached most of the time in the Sandemans' meeting-house, as most of that society are now scattered; but it would not contain half the people. The last Sabbath I preached in Dr. Elliot's meeting-house, to, I suppose, upwards of two thousand people. This was the only meeting-house that would hold the people; nor would this have held them, if they had had timely notice. I trust my labour here was not in vain. The word reached the hearts of many, who soon after found peace with God; and, as there was no Methodist preacher there when I left them, they joined Mr. Skillman's church, who is a lively, useful Baptist minister.

In the end of May I arrived at Cumberland, where I tarried about a month; and then set off for Windsor, &c., to meet Mr. Garrettson. During my absence, I found, the classes had met but badly, and

some not at all. Since that time, I have endeavoured to labour in my Lord's vineyard, and find He is a gracious Master. I have always found Him faithful to His promise. I feel His love better than life, and I trust I shall spend and end my days in His service. Only I am ashamed that I have made no greater progress in the Divine life.

W. B.

SHELBURNE, *June 1st, 1788.*

THE following account of the latter years of Mr. Black's life was written by the Rev. Richard Knight, one of his fellow-labourers in Nova-Scotia :—

IN the year 1786 we find his name on the Minutes of Conference, as a duly authorized and regularly appointed minister of our Connexion. He had, however, for five years previous to this devoted his whole time and energy to the important work of calling sinners to repentance. He had, amidst much labour and opposition, and sometimes even peril, been singularly successful; but now, a more special and regular path of ministerial duty was marked out for him. To the itinerant work (as may be seen from his journals and letters) he brought a constitution of more than ordinary strength; a strong, sound, and discriminating judgment; the very desirable possession of great Christian prudence; an ardent thirst for the attainment of knowledge; talents for the ministry of the most useful kind; a heart intensely inflamed for the salvation of souls, and a fixed purpose to labour for God. These varied and important qualifications became still more valuable when

strengthened by faithful exercise, and matured by experience. Since I have read his pastoral letters and journals, and have thus caught some glimpses of him in the closet, in the family, in the church, and in the world, I can see how it is, that his memory is embalmed in the most endearing recollections of the churches. I had heard him called, long before I saw him, "the Apostle of Methodism in Nova-Scotia." I have since found, that to this distinguished honour he has an unquestioned claim. Some favourable opinion must be formed of his zeal, when we find the devoted Dr. Coke, who was a missionary in body and soul, thus writing to him:—"You cannot be so useful in one Circuit in England as you are now; but do not kill yourself. I am almost angry with you for shortening your useful life." His zeal, and love for souls, were as the fire upon the Jewish altar, always burning; and to the missionary devotion of his early life doubtless it was owing, that he so soon came upon the supernumerary list: but he worked while it was day. With the venerable Wesley and Dr. Coke he kept up a regular correspondence; and to his judgment they paid considerable deference. In their letters to him, they speak of him in terms of warm commendation; and therefore it was that so early as 1789, three years only from the commencement of his regular itinerancy, we find him appointed as "presiding elder, or general superintendent of the missions in Nova-Scotia, New-Brunswick, and Newfoundland." The estimation in which he was held by Dr. Coke (on whom then rested the principal management of the foreign missions) may be seen from the following fact,—that the doctor wished him to take the general superintendence of the missions in the Leeward Islands. To this

appointment Mr. Black acceded; and, as preparatory to his entering upon the regular performance of its onerous duties, visited, in the year 1793, in company with the doctor, the scene of his intended labours. The exercises of his mind at this period were intense and interesting. He thus sets them before us:—

“To-morrow we are to sail for St. Eustatius. O my Lord, let Thy presence go with us; and if it is not for Thy glory that I should go to the West Indies, let me not go! I desire not to choose for myself: rather let Infinite Wisdom choose for me. Sometimes the thought of going to those islands appears to me like death and the grave; but I feel resigned. ‘Not my will, but Thine be done!’” The day after they sailed, he thus writes in his journal: “My great desire is to enjoy God, and to live in His will. Away, ye earthly loves, and leave me to my God! His love, His favour, His will, are dearer to me than life itself. O, what is life without Him but a dull, empty round?” This submissive state of mind he held fast throughout the voyage; for we find him, when approaching its close, thus recording his feelings:—“I have had much pleasure this evening in my closet-duties. I said, with the disciples on Mount Tabor, ‘It is good to be here.’ I feel thankful at the thought that Infinite Wisdom is at the helm of affairs, and directs the whole; and here my soul would rest. Let me cheerfully go wherever Thy providence appoints. Though the flesh would incline me to prefer England to any other part of the world, especially to the sultry climes of the West Indies, yet I wish to walk not after the will of the flesh, but after the will of my God. Sovereign of the world, sanctify my will! Let all within me be in sweet subjection to Thyself.

A thousand times rather would I die, than live to sin against such goodness and purity as are in Thee. To lose my place in the scale of being would be a less evil, than to lose the image of God, and sink into the base drudgery of sin and the vassalage of Satan."

His stay, however, in the West Indies was short. The brethren in the Nova-Scotia District thought his removal from among them would be attended with injury to the mission ; and making their opinion known to Dr. Coke, he was continued in his former station.

In July, 1791, he visited the island of Newfoundland. The result was a large accession to the Methodist society there, and the dawn of that brighter day which has since shone upon our mission in that island. Newfoundland had early engaged the attention of Mr. Wesley. Some years previous to the visit of Mr. Black, Mr. Wesley and Lady Huntingdon had prevailed on the Bishop of Bristol to give episcopal ordination to Laurence Coughlan, who had for seven years travelled in our Connexion. He was sent thither. On his arrival he found the moral and spiritual condition of the people too much resembling the bleak and gloomy coasts of the country in which they resided. After three years' toil and disappointment, he was the means of effecting much good. He established a society ; but its discipline and modes of worship, owing to the peculiar relations in which he stood, had neither the simplicity nor the freedom of Methodism in England. This want of independence marred, in some considerable degree, the good which had been effected. Mr. Black therefore found religion at a very low ebb on his arrival. He observes : "I reached Carbonear, where I was joyfully received by

brother M'Geary, a Methodist preacher. He said he had been weeping before the Lord over his lonely situation, and the deadness of the people, and that my coming was like life from the dead to him. There was a great work here, a number of years ago, under the ministry of Mr. Coughlan; but some of the fruits of it are gone to heaven, some gone back unto the world, and now only about fifteen women meet in class." The arrival of Mr. Black retrieved the mission from abandonment, (for Mr. M'Geary had determined to leave the island,) and laid the foundation of its future prosperity. His visit to Newfoundland may be considered as forming the most useful and interesting portion of his missionary life. As such he thought it himself, and spoke of it to the last with feelings of great pleasure. He was indeed to that land as the messenger of mercy. No sooner did he open his providential embassy, than the Lord crowned his labours with success, and a blessed revival broke forth, marked by depth, and extent, and all the characters of a work truly Divine. No less than two hundred souls were savingly converted to God during his brief sojourn in Conception-Bay. Nor are the fruits of that visit to be limited by its immediate results. He organized Methodism; settled the mission-property, and secured it to the Connexion; increased and inspirited the society; and, by laying their case before Mr. Wesley, obtained for them the help they needed. He then left their shores, and thus describes the circumstances connected with his departure:—"I think I never had so affecting a parting with any people before in my life. It was hard work to tear away from them. I was nearly an hour shaking hands with them, some twice and thrice over; and even then we hardly knew how

to part ; but I at last rushed from among them, and left them weeping as for an only son." In Newfoundland, though most of those who knew him have passed away, his memory is still blessed.

He reached Nova-Scotia from this missionary excursion in October, 1791, after a rough and dangerous passage. But here new trials awaited him. "On my arrival," he says, "I was sorry to find that some painful and difficult circumstances had occurred, in consequence of which Mr. M—— is out of society, and we have no meeting-house to preach in. Lord, make all things to work for the best!" Mr. M—— continued for some time untractable, and would agree to no arrangements either for selling or letting the preaching-house. The mind of Mr. Black was much exercised ; but on this occasion, as on many others, he found a comforter in the excellent woman who was so truly a help meet for him. Several letters had passed between him and Mr. M——, who was still obstinate. "I was much affected," said he, "in reading the letters. The Lord pity that untoward man ! But the following letter from my dear wife much comforted me. She says, 'Blessed be God, you have a Friend who can and will bear you up under all your trials. Fain would I help to bear your burdens, for they are great at present. Long has our heavenly Father kept us from almost everything that might disturb our peace ; but at length He sees fit in His godly wisdom to try us ; but O ! be faithful unto the end. May our gracious Lord be with you, to bless, direct, and comfort you.'" The unyielding disposition of Mr. M—— rendered it necessary that measures should be used to procure another chapel. Our venerated friend engaged ardently in this business. A sub-

scription-list was opened, and in one day £200 were raised, and a place of worship in due time erected.

In the year 1812 his name was put down on the stations as supernumerary: but from that time to the period of his decease, he continued to render many and important services to the church; and in her most endearing recollection is his name enshrined. Nor did he forget her in his last will. To the old chapel, with which he was connected by so many affecting associations, he left £250; and to the poor of the Wesleyan society in Halifax, the sum of £50. But, "our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" The time came, when the man who had been for so many years looked up to as the father of Methodism in this province, must pass from the fellowship of the militant to that of the triumphant church. Indications of the rapid approaches of death were perceived by his friends for some weeks; but they were scarcely prepared to hear of his removal when it actually took place. Conversing with him a few days before his death, on the awful disease which was raging in our town, he, with his usual heavenly smile, said, "It does not matter; I must soon go: whether it be by the cholera, or" (pointing to his swollen legs) "this dropsy, it is all the same; I leave it to my Master to choose." But his days were numbered. On Sunday, September 6th, 1834, he felt himself worse than usual. I saw him just before the time of evening service. His conduct towards me was, as it had been from the first hour I saw him, that of the utmost kindness and affection. Knowing that my whole time had been occupied in visiting the cholera patients at the hospital, and in their own habitations, and in attending to the regular duties of the

Circuit, he feelingly entreated me to be careful of my health, for the sake of my family and the church. I did not, however, think that his end was so near.

When called to visit him early in the morning of the day on which he died, September 8th, I felt the force of the often-quoted language of Dr. Young:—

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.”

I found him contending with the last enemy, but in the perfect possession of his reason, although so oppressed by the complicated afflictions under which he laboured in his last hour, as to find very great difficulty in speaking. “I trust, sir,” said I, “you feel that Saviour to be precious whom you have held forth so long to others.” He said, “All is well; all is peace; no fear, no doubt. Let Him do as He will: He knows what is best.” I referred to his long and useful life. He said very impressively, “Leave all that; say no more. All is well.” We joined in prayer; and his spirit was evidently much engaged in the solemn exercise. On leaving the room, I said, “You will soon be in that glory of which you have so often spoken in the course of your long ministry.” “I shall soon be there,” he said, “where Christ is gone before me.” After this he sunk very fast, and spoke little, and that with considerable difficulty. His last words were, “Give my farewell blessing to your family, and to the society;” and, “God bless you. All is well.”

As a man, Mr. Black was affable, generous, prudent, and one that followed after peace. As a Christian, his piety was deep, uniform, active, and growing. As a minister, he possessed a very con-

siderable knowledge of divinity. He had given attention to reading and study, and could rightly divide the word of truth. He was well acquainted with human nature; possessed a longing desire for the salvation of souls; was faithful, affectionate, and assiduous. In short, he had all those qualifications which never fail to make the minister respected, beloved, and useful. As the head of a family, he "walked before his house in a perfect way," as his journals and letters abundantly testify. His reward is with his God; and being dead he yet speaketh. To ministers he has left an example, and to the church an admonition to be faithful. A funeral sermon was preached in the old chapel, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; when a gracious feeling pervaded the congregation. May the effects be permanent and saving!

THE following character of Mr. Black is extracted from the Minutes of Conference for 1835:—

WILLIAM BLACK. He was a native of Huddersfield, Yorkshire, which place he left at an early period of life, and accompanied his parents to the province of Nova-Scotia. Soon after his arrival in that country, he was deeply convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, and under the guidance of the same Spirit sought and obtained redemption through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of his sins. In the year 1786 he was set apart to the work of the ministry; to which sacred employment he brought a constitution of more than ordinary strength, a sound and discriminating judgment, an earnest desire for useful knowledge, an enlightened zeal for

the glory of God, and a fixed purpose of mind to seek and save the souls of men. He was a diligent student, as well as a faithful and laborious pastor; and his profiting appeared unto all. Though placed in circumstances very unfavourable to mental cultivation, he so improved the few advantages which he enjoyed, that he was enabled to read the oracles of God in the languages in which they were originally revealed to man; and his reading in theology and ecclesiastical history was extensive and judicious. He was an acceptable and useful preacher of the Gospel; and hundreds of people, who were by his instrumentality converted from the error of their way, will be the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. On the recommendation of the late venerable Dr. Coke, he was appointed general superintendent of our missions in British America; the duties of which important office he discharged in a manner alike honourable to himself, and beneficial to the missionaries and societies that were entrusted to his care; and by them he was justly regarded as the father of Methodism in that portion of the British empire. After a long, laborious, and useful life, he died, as he had lived, in peace with God and man, on the 8th of September, 1834, in the seventieth year of his age. His last words were, "All is well! all is peace! I shall soon be in that glory to which Christ has gone before me."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. WILLIAM ASHMAN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at Colford, in the parish of Kilmersdon, in the county of Somerset, in the year of our Lord 1734. My father and mother were very honest people, but had no religion. My mother had something of the form of godliness, and in that she trusted; but my father had neither the form nor power. He was much addicted to swearing, and paid little or no regard to the Sabbath-day, for which my mother did often reprove him; but to little purpose, till on receiving the news that his brother, a very wicked man, was killed by falling down a coal-pit, he was cut to the heart. Then I saw him drop a tear, and wring his hands, saying, "What is become of his poor soul?"

About this time Providence brought the Rev. Mr. Wesley into our parish to preach; and great numbers of people flocked to hear, among whom were my father and mother. I was then present with my mother, who was greatly affected with the preaching, and said to my father, "I never saw or heard such

a man before: I think there has not been such a man on the earth since the days of the apostles. I believe he is raised up for some very great work, and that the end of the world is near at hand." My father now began to attend to what he heard, and the word made a lasting impression on his mind; so that he was quite reformed, and began to pray in his family. A society began to be formed, and a mighty outpouring of the Spirit fell on the people, so that there was a great ingathering of souls to Jesus Christ. The poor people began to build a preaching-house at Colford, though they had not a shilling in hand to do it with. One or two said, "What are we going about? We cannot go on with it." One said, "Let us begin as if the king was to pay for it." It was then agreed, that every member of the society should pay one penny a week at least, and others what they thought proper. There was also a weekly collection towards the building, and the people were of one heart and one soul. As there was a great reformation from swearing, drunkenness, and Sabbath-breaking, the money that built the preaching-house was saved out of the ale-houses; and many uncomfortable families were made truly happy.

The first person, I think, that received a clear sense of the pardon of sin, and, I believe, a clean heart at the same time, was the wife of Joseph Wilcocks, at Holcombe, who died in a short time after in the full triumph of faith, her soul being filled with perfect love that casteth out all fear. Many being present at her death caught the heavenly flame, which began now to spread in all the meetings; so that in a few months many were justified, and, I believe, many of them sanctified; though

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they did not know what justification or sanctification meant, only they expressed themselves thus: "I am very happy. I love God with all my heart, and with all my soul; and I know God loves me, and that Jesus Christ died for me, and that all my sins are forgiven." This was not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as was evident in their lives; for the lions became lambs.

Among this number was my father, who became a new creature in Christ Jesus: all old things were done away, and all things became new. I have heard him say, that for many years together he did not lose a comfortable sense of the presence of God; and that it was his meat and drink to do the will of God; and his whole delight was to give his heart to God, and to set his affections on things above. In his lying down and in his rising up his heart was full of prayer and praise to God. He continued a very useful and faithful member of society above forty years; and always paid three-pence a week to his class, which he never failed to meet during all that time. He always gave a shilling a quarter when he received his ticket, which he never once failed to receive; and also gave freely at every other collection. He thought he never could do too much for so good a cause; and as he lived, so he died in the full assurance of faith, leaving a clear testimony that he was a sincere Christian. Some of his last words to my brother, and those that were then present, were, "Weep not for me; for I am going to heaven:" and just as he departed, my brother perceived a very bright light shine on the bed, which far exceeded all the light that was in the room. And he was so overwhelmed with the Divine pre-

sence, that he sunk down on his knees by the bedside, where he remained filled with such a sense of the presence of God, that he was not able to speak or move for some time, and then broke out in a flood of tears, giving praise to God.

My mother died three or four years before my father, in the eighty-sixth year of her age. She had not so great a degree of faith as my father; yet she feared the Lord and wrought righteousness, was diligent in all the means of grace, and was a sincere lover of all the preachers and all good people; was a good wife, a tender mother, a good neighbour, and a sincere friend. The Lord favoured her with a very easy death. She rose as usual, and walked about the room, and finding herself faint sat down in her chair. My brother being present took her in his arms, when she said, "Into Thy hand I commend my spirit, O Thou God of my salvation: come, Lord Jesus," and spake no more. She always rose early, never used tea, had five children, was diligent in business, and it never cost her twenty shillings for medicines in her whole life.

I well remember the Lord was striving with me ever since I was four or five years old, inclining me to love good persons and good things. I thought all ministers were good men, and were sure of going to heaven: therefore I had a desire in my heart to be a minister, that I might go to heaven. Now the Lord began to pour out His Spirit on the children; and a great number, of different ages, were truly convinced of sin, and many found the pardon of sin, and could rejoice in God, amongst whom I was one. There were prayer-meetings almost every night in the week; and many were justified in those meetings. It was in one of those meetings that the

Lord was pleased to cut me to the heart, under my father's prayer, when I was between eleven and twelve years old. The work continued to increase, and many were converted daily, some under the preaching, some in private meetings, and some without any outward means. Several very wicked men were convinced while they were in the bowels of the earth, working in the coal-mines. Thus the Lord was pleased to pour out His Spirit in a wonderful manner in public and private, on the surface of the earth, and in the bowels of it, to show His almighty power.

I have often thought, if I had been taken proper care of, and put to a Christian school, I might have been far more useful than I am. I went to school to the Dissenting minister in Colford, who was a Welshman, and exceedingly warm in his temper. I think he meant to do good; for he studied very hard to make sermons, and preached twice on Sundays, morning and afternoon, for near two hours together, but to very little purpose; for there were very few, if any, in the congregation that had the fear of God; and not one boy in the school, except myself, that had any desire to love and serve God. This was a very great hurt to me. Mrs. ——— took notice of me, and desired to know what was the matter, and why she did not see me playing with the boys. She said, "I hear you go to the Methodist meetings, and hold a meeting with the children, and that you pray with them. I am afraid you will hurt your mind, if you study too much about such deep things."

Some time after my master said, "So, William, I am told that your father is converted, and that he prays in public, and that you pray also." I was as much afraid as if I had stolen something, and trembled greatly; but, recovering myself a little, I

said, "Yes, sir; and do not you pray with us every morning?" He said, "Yes, I do; but how can you pray?" I said, "When I kneel down, I speak what God puts into my mind." He said, "What! are you inspired, then?" I said, "I do not know what you mean: I know that I love God, and that God loves me." He said, "What is God?" I said, "I love to read the Bible, and other good books." He said, "What good books have you?" I said, "Some of Mr. Wesley's." On his desiring to see one of them, I lent it, which he read, and when he came to those words, "He that is born of God sinneth not," he smiled, and said to Mrs. —, "You see, my dear, what an error!" Mrs. — said, "Error, my dear! I think St. John makes use of the same words in his Epistle." She took the Bible, and found it so. They then read, and compared what they read with the Bible; and soon after they both attended the preaching, and continued so to do while they continued at Colford: for, soon after, he began to alter his manner of preaching, and then some of the heads of the meeting were displeased; therefore he left them, and I heard they both died in the true Christian faith.

From the time I was convinced under my father's prayer, I began to seek the Lord in all the means of grace, and found it very comfortable to my soul. Sometimes four or five of us boys met together in the corner of some field to sing and pray, and sometimes in a stable, barn, or hay-loft; and it was my meat and drink to do the will of God. In this state I continued till I was fourteen years old, and then went into a family that were professed Methodists, to learn the stocking business. The family consisted of a master and mistress, and a young man three or

four years older than myself: but their deportment was very unbecoming the Gospel. Sometimes they were full of levity, and at other times full of evil tempers, and often made use of very unbecoming words. This grieved me very much, and for a time it hurt my mind; but after a while I was determined to live more close to God than ever, and to make a good use of bad example, which the Lord was pleased to enable me to do, and my soul was truly alive to God.

When I was about sixteen, I was truly and deeply convinced of inbred sin, the evil of my heart, and how offensive it was to God; and saw the necessity of a clean heart and a right spirit, and had a very great desire to be wholly renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. Under the burden of my evil nature I groaned for some time; but having no one that understood my case, I did not make proper use of the blessing which God was pleased to confer upon me, and which He would have conferred more abundantly, if I had retained what He had given me. I continued in this family about three years; and soon after I left it, my master failed in business, left the country, went into the army, and farther and farther from God; but as he died abroad, I do not know what end he made. The young man I spoke of married, went into business, and soon failed also: he left the country, went into the army, and died abroad; so I am equally ignorant of the manner of his death. But there were many circumstances in their short lives too shocking to mention. I am a witness that they were triflers with God, and with their own souls, and the means of grace. Let this be a caution to all those who have tasted the good word of God, and have felt the powers of the

world to come, to take care how they draw back in their hearts from God. "Be not deceived; God will not be mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

From the time I was eighteen till I was twenty, I suffered loss in my soul; but when I was about twenty-one, being then married to my present wife, I began to seek the Lord again with all my heart, and with all my strength; and I soon found Him as good as His word; for He filled my soul with perfect love that casteth out all slavish fear. I then entered into a solemn covenant with God, that I would be His, and serve Him all the days of my life. My wife willingly joined with me, and we set out for the kingdom of heaven with all our hearts; and I soon found power to love God with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength. My body and soul were wholly given up to God; and I think no common man ever enjoyed more sweet and close union and communion with God than I did. I hated sin with a perfect hatred, and loved God and holiness with a perfect heart. I can truly say, I lived a life all devoted to God, and it was my delight to give God all my heart. It was my element to love God and delight in Him, and to do His will; and, as I loved Him, so I feared to offend Him. Indeed, I felt no inclination to offend the God I loved. At this time I went into business, and the Lord was pleased to bless me in all I set my hands unto.

From twenty-one until I was thirty, I was leader of two, and sometimes three classes and a band, and steward of the society, and general steward of the Circuit. I often met the people in public, and read Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament over and

over, and his Sermons in public and private. The Lord was with me and blessed me in all I did, gave me favour in the eyes of the people, and made my weak endeavours useful to many. My sister was justified under my prayer, and died very happy soon after. When I was about thirty-one the Lord inclined and constrained me to speak in public. Nothing but the mighty power of God could cause me to do this; for I am naturally of a fearful, bashful, and shy disposition. Indeed, it is a miracle that I ever faced a congregation; but there is nothing too hard for God, who can out of the stones raise up children to Abraham. I was a local preacher about three years, during which time the Lord was pleased to bless the word which He enabled me to deliver, to the conviction and conversion of many; and to the encouragement of seekers, and the building up of believers in the most holy faith. Many declared on their death-bed that at such a time, while I was preaching, the word took such hold of them as never to leave them afterwards.

When I was thirty-four years old, I wrote to Mr. Wesley, to let him know that I had a mind to give up myself more fully to the work of God; when he was pleased to accept of me, weak and unworthy as I was. This was not done because I could not live at home, or for any temporal advantage; for I had a good house of my own, and good business, by which I cleared fifty pounds a year with half the labour I have had since I left home. I had also a kind father, a tender mother, a loving wife, and many friends; but I took up my cross, and a great one it was to me and my wife. We went, according to appointment, into the east of Cornwall, and with great difficulty I could get a place for her to live in. At last I agreed

with Mr. Holmes, near Tavistock, to board her for so much a week. He had three daughters and a son, all very kind and loving: they spent the year very comfortably together, and were made a blessing to each other. From that time to the present, which is twenty-one years, I have always gone where I was appointed without the least objection; and as I had no other motive in leaving my business and country, but to do good to the souls of my fellow-creatures, I have made it my study to be as useful as possible in the holiness of my life, and setting a good example before all, in every Circuit where I have gone; and the Lord has been pleased to favour me with the affections of all good people.

With respect to my wife, from the time we entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord, to serve Him all the days of our lives, she has never repented of it, but has held fast the engagement. She loves God and her blessed Saviour with an upright heart, and serves Him with a willing mind. She is a sincere lover of the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, loves all the preachers, and esteems a connexion with them above any people on earth. With regard to myself, the Lord has made me an instrument in His hand, in every Circuit where I have laboured, for the conviction and conversion of many souls; and I have never spent one year without seeing more or less fruit of my labour, and some happy deaths.

I believe the preachers called Methodists to be one of the most useful bodies of men in these kingdoms; and the plan hitherto followed by them to be the best that ever was laid down since the apostles' days. I pray God it may ever continue, and that each of us who are in connexion may labour to be

more and more useful. I believe there is more real religion among the Methodists than among any other body of people in these kingdoms; but there is not half enough, considering the means they enjoy. This is the fourth year I have spent in this country: and I observe many things that hinder vital religion; namely, smuggling, drinking to excess, lewdness, and a worldly spirit. It is no wonder that real religion is at a low ebb; whilst the more of this world's goods many people have, the closer they hold them, and are less useful and less alive to God than when they were worth far less. What a pity that three or four thousand pounds should make men less useful and less happy! Yet this is too often seen and known by sad experience, and will be a great hurt to the Methodist cause.

The following is my creed:—I believe that God created man in His own image, able to stand, but liable to fall: and that He gave him a law for the trial of his obedience, as a free agent, which law man broke, and thereby lost the image of his Creator, and was driven out of paradise: that in Adam all died, the consequence of which is, we are all born in sin, with an evil heart of unbelief departing from the living God. This evil nature deserves God's wrath; and in this state lay the whole human race, when the Lion of the tribe of Judah undertook to open the book, and to unloose the seals thereof. Then it was that God came to our first parents, and preached the Gospel to them, and in so doing He preached the Gospel to every soul of man; so that the free gift is come upon all men to justification of life. The happy consequence of this is, all that die in a state of infancy, and all that never had the use of reason, are received into the kingdom of heaven, without any

condition to be fulfilled on their part. But the rest of mankind are required to walk agreeable to the light which God is pleased to give them ; for Christ is the true light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world ; and by the grace of God He tasted death for every man. God is loving to every man, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth to be saved.

With regard to my preaching, I have always made it a rule, but more abundantly of late, to deliver every discourse as if it was to be my last, and to desire the people to hear and to receive it in the same manner. In my doctrine I never forget to point out to man the state and condition he is in by nature ; and likewise what he has brought on himself by evil practice, with the danger of continuing in an impenitent state, and the great misery that will be consequent upon living and dying without true repentance, the pardon of sin, and holiness of heart. Then I hold forth Jesus Christ, as a present and willing Saviour to every man that will forsake his sins and come to Him in a proper manner. I encourage all that labour and are heavy laden to come to the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, according to the words of our blessed Saviour, " Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in nowise cast him out."

I tell the people that they ought not to rest without the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins ; that this blessing is received by faith ; and that it is free for all who feel their need of it. To those who know they have redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sin, I preach that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin ; and

that there are as many promises in the word of God that He will sanctify as there are that He will justify us. I believe Jesus Christ has purchased as much holiness for us as Adam lost ; and that God is willing to restore us to His image, and to stamp it on our hearts. We are justified by faith, and we are sanctified by faith. "Be it unto thee according to thy faith. If thou canst believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," "from the guilt, from the power, and from the inbeing of sin." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. Perfect love casteth out all fear." "If I can but touch the hem of His garment, I shall be made whole." "As many as touched Him were made perfectly whole." "Fear not, only believe, and thou shalt be made whole."

I have seen the kind hand of Providence over me all the days of my life in general, and likewise in many particular instances. When I was between five and six years old I had a very bad fever. I have heard my mother say that she expected every breath to be my last for some days and nights together. Many times horses have fallen with me, and left me senseless. When I was between fifteen and sixteen, as I was walking by myself in a field, a strong young man coming behind me gave me a violent blow on my back, which left me breathless for some time. When I came to myself, I found him assisting me by rubbing my face, &c. When I was able to speak, I asked, why he did so : he assigned no reason, but begged I would not tell it, and made me promise that I never would while he lived, which was but a few years, and then he died a very miserable death. Two or three times as I was learning to swim, going too far out of my depth, I was within a hair's breadth of being drowned.

When I was about twenty-nine years of age, I had a fever which confined me to my bed and room eight weeks. My life was despaired of; and, had not my wife put clarified honey into my mouth, which found its way down my throat, I must have died, for my mouth and tongue were very black, and nothing would pass. Since I have travelled as a preacher I have been in great danger of losing my life in deep snow. Once, between Sarum and Shaston, being quite out of my road, and in very great distress, I cried unto the Lord to direct me, for I was utterly at a loss which way to go. My strength failing, and night coming on, and being many miles from any town, I could see no house or place of shelter; and the snow falling very fast, so that it filled up my tracks after me, whilst a very strong, sharp, piercing north-east wind blew, I thought it was of no use to go any farther; therefore I stood still, and rested myself by leaning on the horse's neck. I then said, "Lord, what shall I do? Must I die here; or must I go to the right hand, or to the left?" It came into my mind to go to the right. I found some comfort with the impression, and my strength was renewed.

I had not walked above a quarter of an hour before I saw a smoke arise, and gladly made towards it. It proved to be a small cottage, where the woman had just put some wet straw on the fire, which caused a very great smoke. She told me I might come in; but said she had no place for my horse, nor anything for him to eat. She said there was a farm-house about two miles off, and gave me the best directions she could. I set out in the strength of the Lord, trusting in Him to bring me thither; and I do not think I went a quarter of a mile out of the

direct road, though I could see nothing but snow. The farmer gave me and my horse some refreshment, and sent a guide with me to put me in the way to Shaston. If Providence had not brought me to this poor woman's house, it is likely I should have died on the plain, which is called Salisbury Plain, as many did that winter.

At another time, as I was riding very slowly step by step, in a deep hollow road, a man that was out shooting was behind the right-hand hedge, and fired his gun across the road. Some of the shot came about my horse's ears, and some about my face and hat: the main body passed between my head and that of the horse. Had I been one step farther forward, it is likely I should have received the whole body in my neck or the side of my face, which must have killed me on the spot. About two or three years ago, the horse I was riding on fell with me twice, and left me on the ground senseless, of which I did not get the better for some months; and last year my horse fell with me twice, and hurt me, so that it is not likely I shall ever get the better of it. This year my horse was taken very ill; and the horse that was lent me, being too small, fell with me, and threw me on my head, and left me senseless on the ground, by which I have received such a hurt in my neck, shoulders, breast, and back, that I do not think I shall ever be quite free from it. But I am in the Lord's hand: let Him do with me as seemeth Him best. O that the remainder of my strength, and my few days, may be all devoted to Him, and spent in His service!

WILLIAM ASHMAN.

UNDER the date of February 17th, 1818, the following letter was addressed to the editor of the Methodist Magazine:—

“It falls to my lot to inform you of the death of one of the oldest Methodist preachers, Mr. William Ashman. He exchanged this world for a better the 9th instant, at Halcomb, in Somersetshire, aged eighty-three.

“The affliction which terminated his life was supposed to be something of the stone, from which he suffered acute pain, which he bore with great fortitude and patience, and considered it as the messenger of death. The last time I saw him was about a week before his dissolution. He told me that he was going the way of all flesh, with an unshaken confidence in God. He said, that he had long since built his house upon the rock Christ Jesus; that he enjoyed a consciousness of the Divine favour, and a lively hope of immortality.

“CHARLES GREENLY.”

IN the obituary department of the Minutes of Conference, it is stated that Mr. Ashman “desisted from travelling as a regular preacher twenty years previous to his dissolution. He lived at his native place, where he continued to exercise his ministry, and to act as a class-leader, till within a short time of his death, which happened on the 9th of February, 1818. At the close of life he declared himself to be very happy in God, and perfectly resigned to His will.”

THE LIFE
OF
MR. RICHARD WHATCOAT.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

1. I WAS born in the year 1736, in the parish of Quinton, in the county of Gloucester. My father dying while I was young left a widow and five children. At thirteen years old I was bound apprentice, and served for eight years. I was never heard, during this time, to swear a vain oath, nor was ever given to lying, gaming, drunkenness, or any other presumptuous sin, but was commended for my honesty and sobriety. And from my childhood I had, at times, serious thoughts on death and eternity.

2. I served the greatest part of my apprenticeship at Darlaston, in Staffordshire. But at the age of twenty-one, I removed from thence to Wednesbury. Here I found myself in continual danger of losing the little religion I had, as the family in which I lived had no religion at all. Therefore I took the first opportunity that offered of removing to another place. And a kind Providence directed me to a family that feared God and wrought righteousness.

3. I soon went with them to hear the Methodists,

which I did with deep attention; and when the preacher was describing the fall of man, I thought he spoke to me in particular, and spoke as if he had known everything that ever was in my heart. When he described the nature and fruits of faith, I was conscious I had it not; and though I believed all the Scripture to be of God, yet I had not the marks of a Christian believer. And I was convinced that if I died in the state wherein I then was, I should be miserable for ever. Yet I could not conceive how I that had lived so sober a life could be the chief of sinners. But this was not long; for I no sooner discovered the spirituality of the law, and the enmity that was in my heart against God, than I could heartily agree to it.

4. The thoughts of death and judgment now struck me with terrible fear. I had a keen apprehension of the wrath of God, and of the fiery indignation due to sinners; so that I could have wished myself to be annihilated, or to be the vilest creature, if I could but escape judgment. In this state I was, when one told me, "I know, God for Christ's sake has forgiven all my sins; and His Spirit witnesseth with my spirit, that I am a child of God." This gave me a good deal of encouragement. And I determined never to rest until I had a testimony in myself, that my sins also were forgiven. But in the mean time, such was the darkness I was in, such my consciousness of guilt, and the just displeasure of Almighty God, that I could find no rest day or night, either for soul or body. So that life was a burden, and I became regardless of all things under the sun. Now all my virtues, which I had some reliance on once, appeared as filthy rags. And many discouraging thoughts were put into my mind; as, "Many

are called, but few chosen ;” “Hath not the potter power over his own clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour ?” From which it was suggested to me, that I was made to dishonour, and so must inevitably perish.

5. On September 3d, 1758, being overwhelmed with guilt and fear, as I was reading, it was as if one whispered to me, “Thou hadst better read no more ; for the more thou readest, the more thou wilt know. ‘And he that knoweth his Lord’s will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.’” I paused a little, and then resolved, “Let the consequence be what it may, I will proceed.” When I came to those words, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,” as I fixed my eyes upon them, in a moment my darkness was removed, and the Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. In the same instant I was filled with unspeakable peace and joy in believing ; and all fear of death, judgment, and hell suddenly vanished away. Before this, I was kept awake by anguish and fear, so that I could not get an hour’s sound sleep in a night. Now I wanted not sleep, being abundantly refreshed by contemplating the rich display of God’s mercy, in adopting so unworthy a creature as I was to be an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

6. This joy and peace continued about three weeks ; after which it was suggested to me, “Hast not thou deceived thyself ? Is it not presumption, to think thou art a child of God ? But if thou art, thou wilt soon fall away ; thou wilt not endure to the end.” This threw me into great heaviness ; but it did not continue long. For as I gave myself unto prayer, and to reading and hearing the word of God

at all opportunities, my evidence became clearer and clearer, my faith and love stronger and stronger. And I found the accomplishment of that promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

7. Yet I soon found, that though I was justified freely, yet I was not wholly sanctified. This brought me into a deep concern, and confirmed my resolution, to admit of no peace, no, nor truce, with the evils which I still found in my heart. I was sensible both that they hindered me at present in all my holy exercises, and that I could not enter into the joy of my Lord, unless they were all rooted out. These considerations led me to consider more attentively the exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we may escape all the corruption that is in the world, and be made partakers of the Divine nature. I was much confirmed in my hope of their accomplishment, by frequently hearing Mr. Mather speak upon the subject. I saw it was the mere gift of God; and, consequently, to be received by faith. And after many sharp and painful conflicts, and many gracious visitations, on March 28th, 1761, my spirit was drawn out and engaged in wrestling with God for about two hours, in a manner I never did before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love. I was all love, and prayer, and praise; and in this happy state, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, I continued for some years; wanting nothing for soul or body, more than I received from day to day.

8. I began to look round, and to observe, more than ever, the whole world full of sin and misery. I felt a strong desire for others to partake of the same happiness with myself. I longed to declare unto

them what I knew of our Saviour. But I first sat down to count the cost; and being then fully convinced of my duty, I began to exhort those of the neighbouring towns to "repent and believe the Gospel." This I did for about a year and a half; but was still convinced I might be more useful as a travelling preacher. This I mentioned to Mr. Pawson, a little before the Conference in 1769. A little after it, he wrote and let me know, that he had proposed me at the Conference, and that I was accepted as a probationer, and stationed in the Oxfordshire Circuit. Having settled my temporal affairs with all the expedition I could, I went into the Circuit, and was received far better than I expected; and I found that affection for the people which never since wore off. After spending some time very agreeably there, I believe to our mutual satisfaction, I removed to Bedford Circuit, where I remained till the Conference in 1774.

9. I was then appointed for Enniskillen Circuit, in the north of Ireland. This was a trial to me on several accounts. I was an utter stranger to Ireland, of which I had heard little good spoken: I had a great aversion to sea-voyages. And what troubled me more than all was, that my mother was on her dying-bed. But she knew and loved the work I was engaged in; so she willingly gave me up to the Lord, though she did not expect to see me any more till we met in eternity. In this Circuit I found many things that were not pleasing to flesh and blood. It took us eight weeks to go through it; and in this time we slept in nearly fifty different places: some of them cold enough; some damp enough; and others, not very clean. We commonly preached two or three times a day, besides

meeting the societies and visiting the sick ; and very frequently we had no other food than potatoes and a little salt meat. By this means, as my constitution was but weak, my strength was nearly exhausted. But it was an ample amends, to see that the work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Upwards of two hundred members were this year added to the society ; a great part of whom had found redemption through the blood of the covenant. And I was entirely willing to wear out my body in so blessed a work.

10. But I was soon cut short ; for, before I got into the next Circuit where I was stationed, namely, that of Armagh, my labour was at an end ; my body quite sunk under me. I was taken with an entire loss of appetite, a violent bleeding at the nose, and profuse night-sweats, so that my flesh was consumed from my bones, and my eyes sunk in my head. My sight also failed me, so that I could not distinguish my most intimate acquaintance the breadth of a room. But although my life was quite despaired of, yet it pleased God to raise me up ; and after a confinement of twelve weeks at Sydare, I removed into Armagh Circuit. But going out before I had sufficiently recovered my strength, the cold seized upon me, and caused such a humour to settle in my legs, that for some time I could not set my feet to the ground. But my mind being set upon my work, I little regarded the pain of my body, so long as I was able to sit on my horse, or stand and speak to the people. So, in about a fortnight, I went into my Circuit again ; but in a fortnight more I was again disabled, the humour returning so violently, that I was laid up for eight weeks. But these afflictions were not grievous : they were all sweetened by the

peace of God which I enjoyed, and the exceeding kindness of my friends where I was. Lord, remember them for good!

11. By my respite from preaching, while I travelled to Dublin, and afterwards to London, and by the frequent use of bathing, both in salt and in fresh water, I gradually recovered my health. And I have great reason to bless God, who has preserved me during the eleven years that I have been an itinerant preacher. In this time He has delivered me from many troubles, both of body and mind. He has enabled me to persevere in my labour, with a single eye. He has kept my heart disengaged from all creature-loves, and all desire of worldly happiness. And I can still truly say,

“ Bless'd with the scorn of finite good,
My soul is lighten'd of her load,
And seeks the things above.”

With the same work, and in the same spirit, may I fill up the remnant of my days! Then may I join the choirs around the throne, and give blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto God and the Lamb for ever and ever!

THE following character of Mr. Whatcoat is taken from the American Minutes of Conference of 1807 :—

RICHARD WHATCOAT, late superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, was born in Gloucestershire, in England, but was early removed to the town of Darlaston, in Staffordshire,

where he became a member of the Methodist society. He remained in that place eight or nine years; and through his gravity, sincerity, and simplicity, was very early chosen to fulfil the offices of a leader, steward, and local preacher. In the year 1769 he offered himself to become an itinerant preacher, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Wesley and the British Conference, and travelled in that character in divers parts of England, Ireland, and the principality of Wales. In the year 1784 he was sent to the United States of America, and occupied various important stations in the cities, towns, Circuits, and Districts, with the fidelity of an apostolic man of God. Upwards of six years, in the latter part of his life, he was a superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church till he was past the seventieth year of his age. We will not use many words to describe this almost inimitable man. Who ever saw him light or trifling? Who ever heard him speak evil of any person? Nay, who ever heard him speak an idle word? He was dead to envy, self-exaltation, and praise; sober without sadness; cheerful without levity; careful without covetousness; and decent without pride. He died not possessed of property sufficient to have paid the expenses of his sickness and funeral, if a charge had been made: so dead was he to the world! Although he was not a man of much erudition, yet he was well read in the word of God. His knowledge of the Scriptures was so great, that one of his friends used to call him his "Concordance." He gave himself greatly to reading; and, notwithstanding that he was called to the office of an overseer of the church at an advanced period of life, he magnified his office by travelling annually three or four thousand miles, through all the United

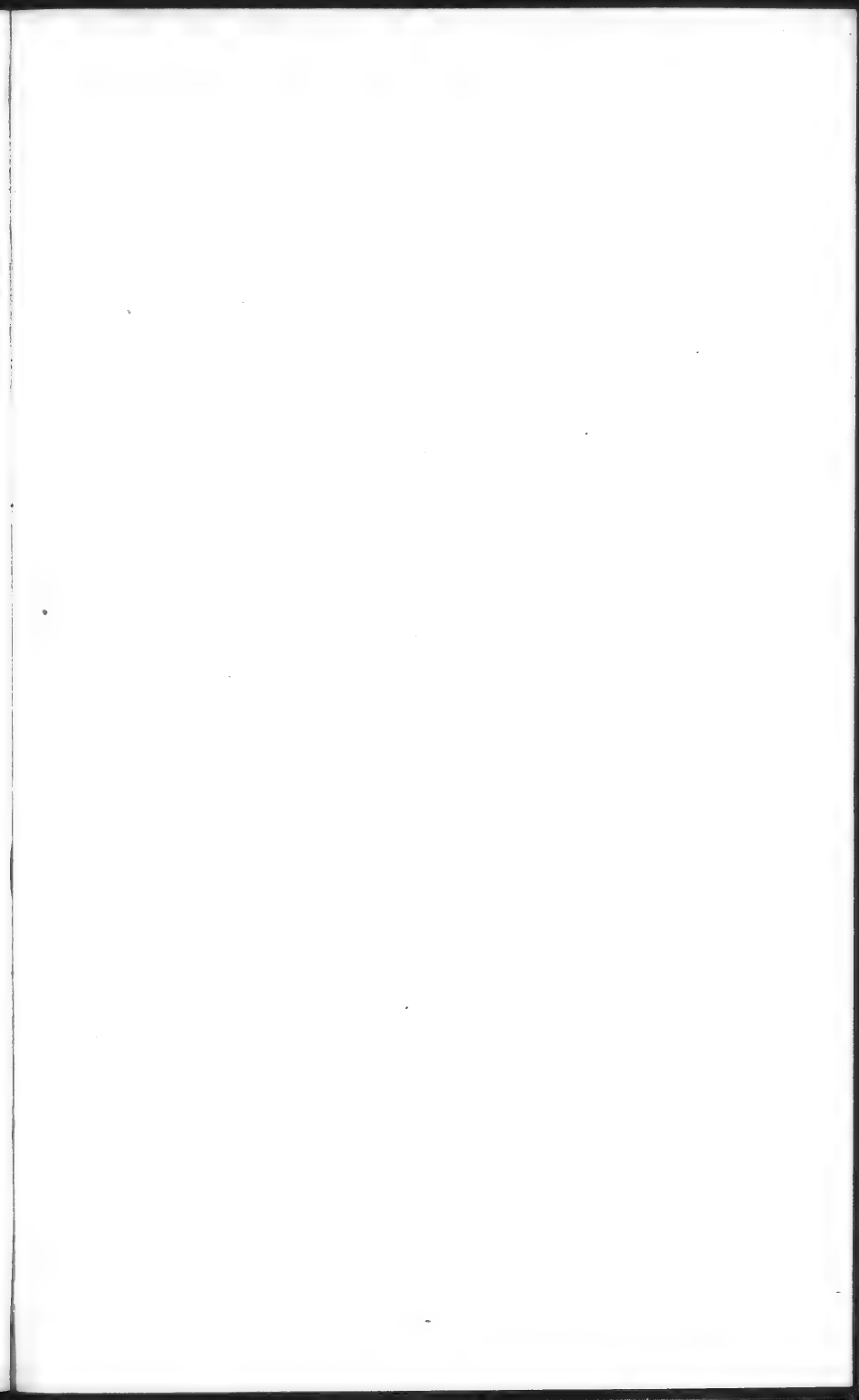
States. A complication of painful and irresistible diseases, produced and aggravated by excessive travelling, closed the scene. He was a prodigy of pain and patience for thirteen weeks. He departed this life in the full assurance of faith, July 5th, 1806, in the house of Richard Basset, Esq., in Dover, state of Delaware. He proved himself worthy of the affection and confidence of the Methodist Connexion in Europe and America. But we cannot, in a few lines, speak his Christian and ministerial excellencies. Indeed, they cannot be fully enumerated: for the man of deep piety frequently will not let his left hand know what his right hand doeth. Those who wish to see a further account of this Israelite indeed, may probably, at some future period, be favoured with a narrative written by himself, of his labours, travels, and sufferings in Europe and America, for about thirty-eight years.

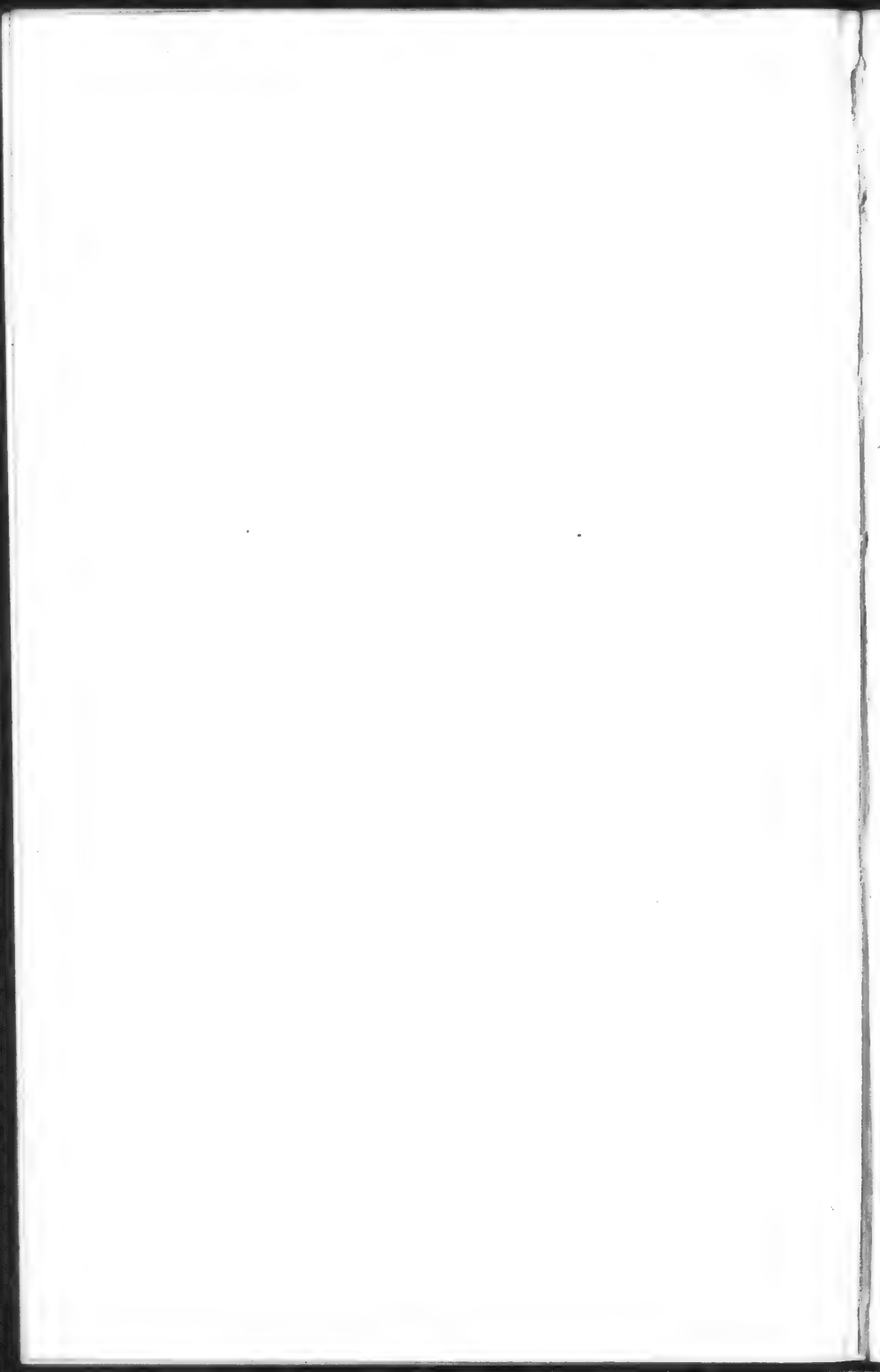
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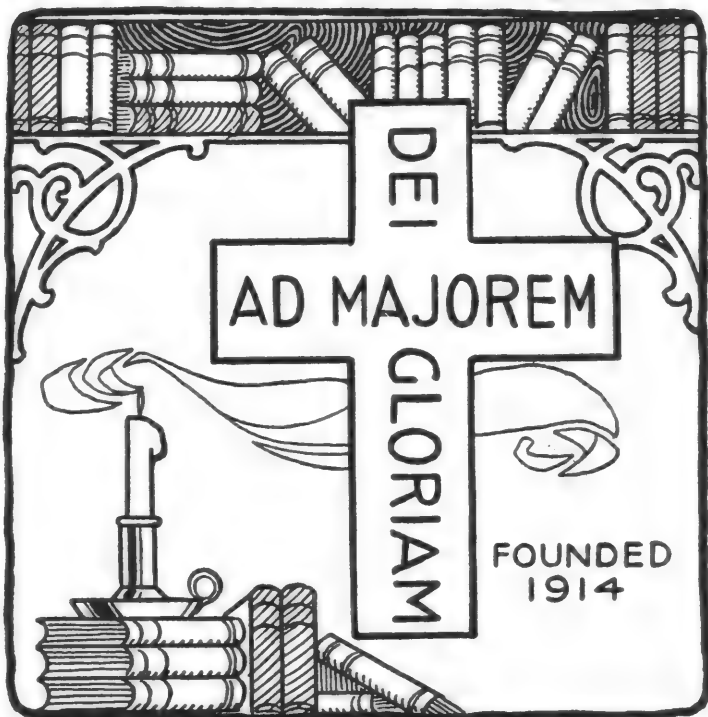
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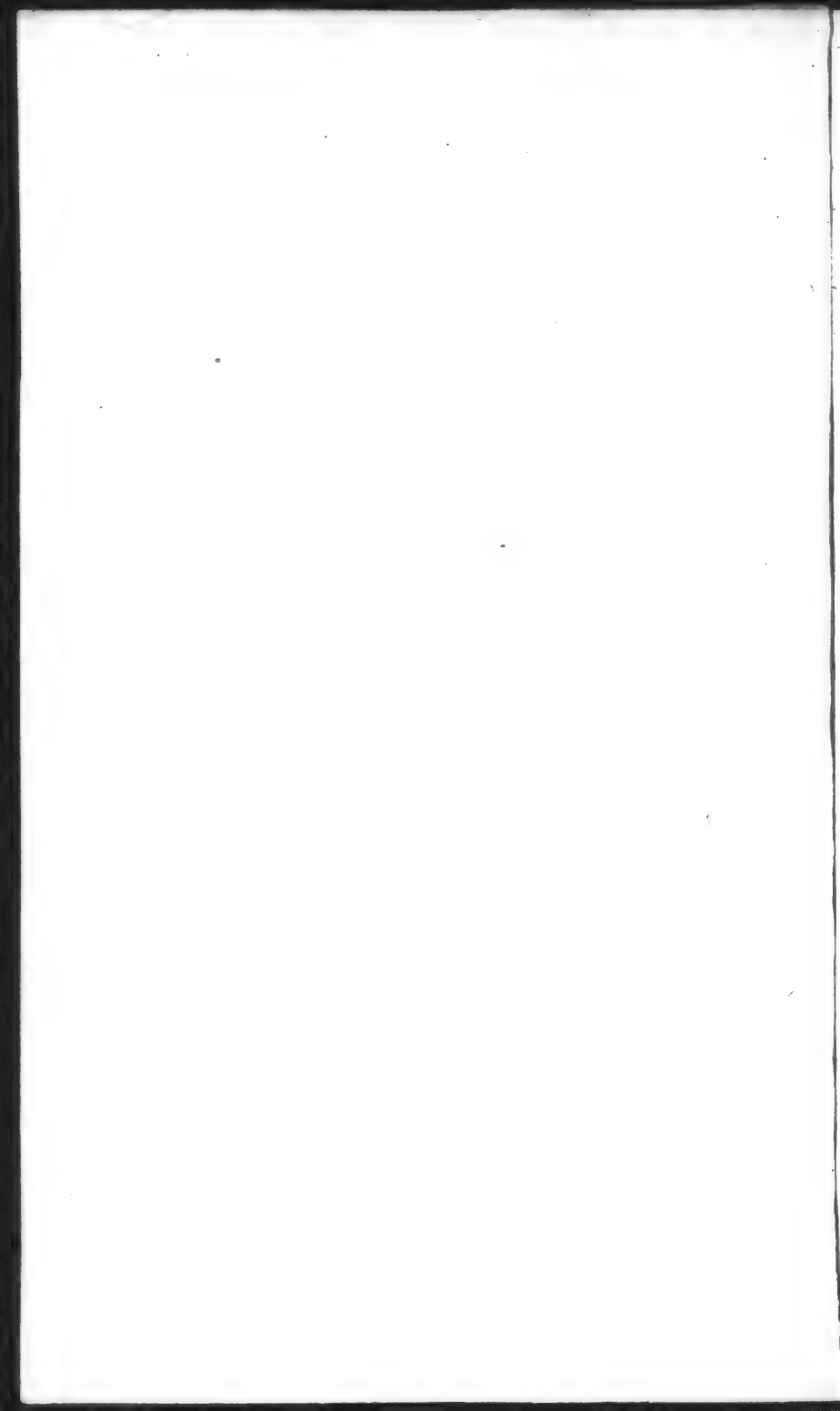
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THE LIVES

OF

EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS JACKSON.

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL LIVES,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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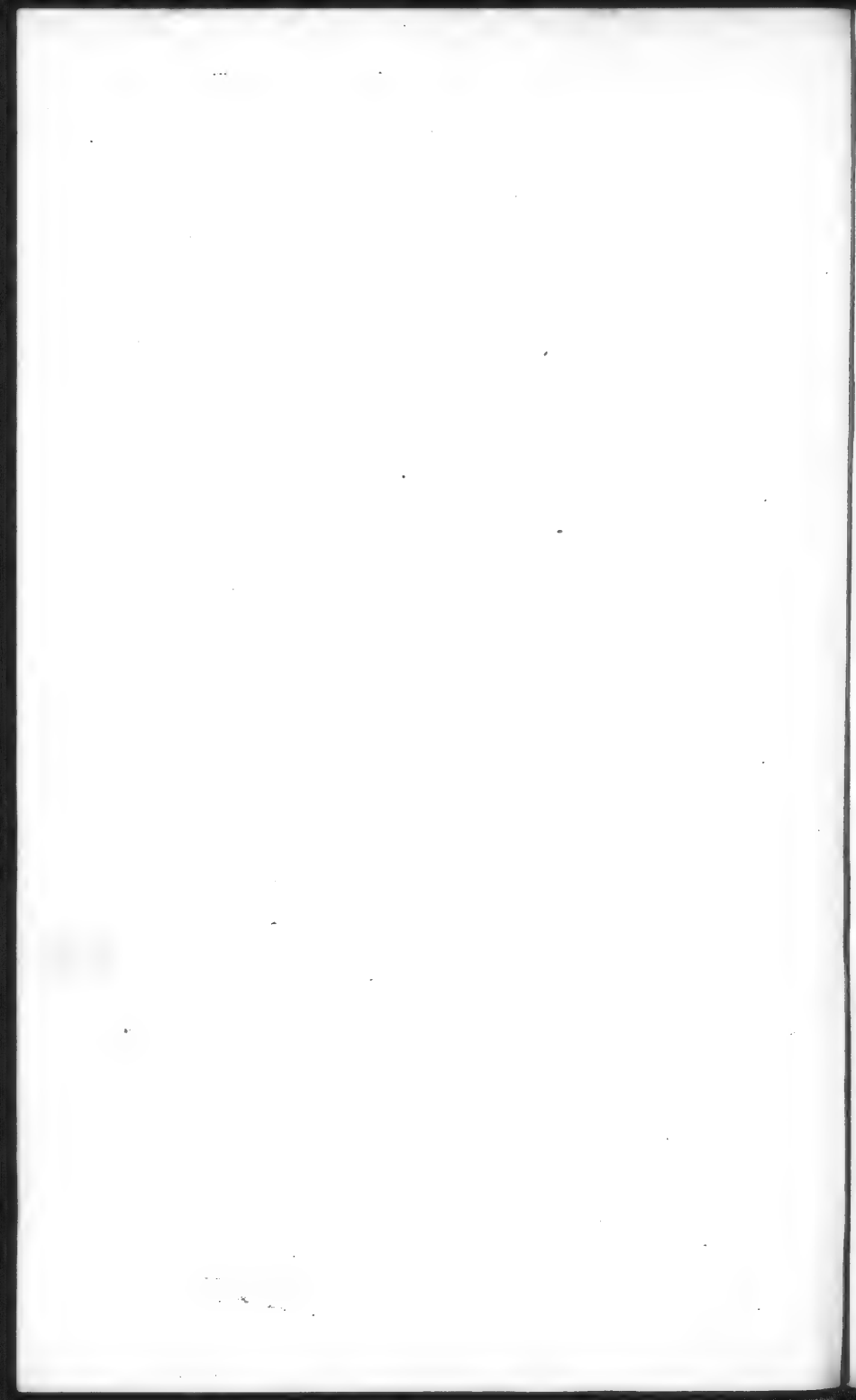
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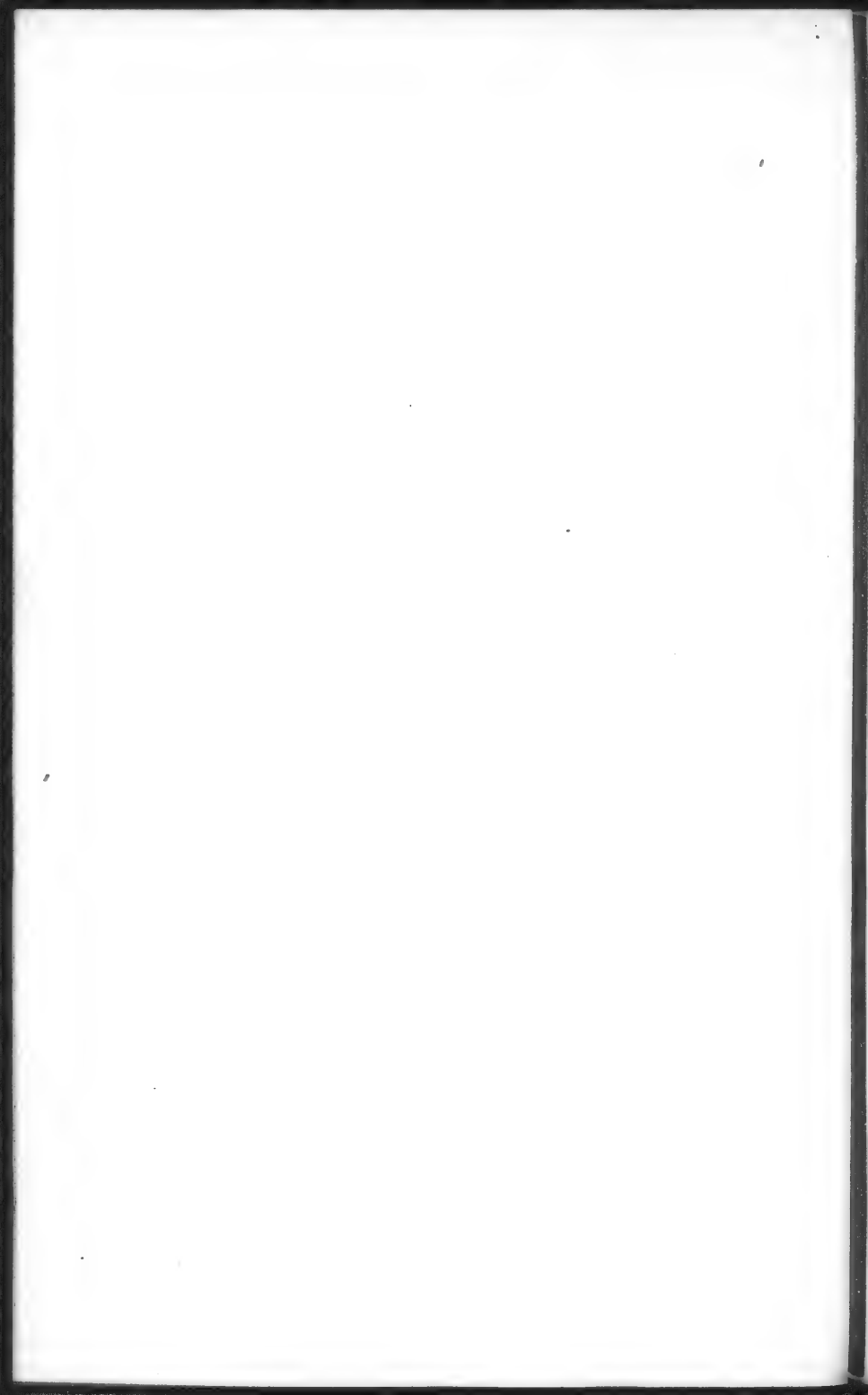


THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN VALTON,
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF;

EDITED, WITH MANY ADDITIONS AND LETTERS,

BY JOSEPH SUTCLIFFE, A.M.

"THEY that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."
(Dan. xii. 3.)



THE LIFE

OF

MR. JOHN VALTON.

It is a remark of a judicious minister, that he read books in general to enlarge his knowledge and improve his mind, but he read Christian experience with a view to bring his heart into a good frame. He was, certainly, correct; for nothing can excite and revive our piety more than models of the most enlivened piety. A personal knowledge of the subject of the following memoir enables me to say, with confidence, that he was such a model, while he remained in private life, as well as when he moved in a sphere of great usefulness, and an enlarged acquaintance with the church of God.

In the present age, our magazines and religious periodical narratives abound with experiences, which sometimes fail to excite that interest which is desirable in the religious world, because of the sameness of sentiment and expression which predominate in those accounts. And, with regard to virtuous persons recently deceased, those who collect the narratives are apt to overlook instructive deviations, and flatter the piety of the dead to please their families. The author of the following narrative will

not, I think, be accused of this : we here see the man, the Christian, and the minister, as he was.

On this delicate subject, a noble lady on the Continent, being importuned to favour the church with some account of the great things which God had done for her soul, replied, "I could have wished that they had required me to publish, with the same exactitude, the greatness of my sins, and the dissipations of my life. This to me would have been much more consolatory. My hands being tied on this head, nothing remains but to conjure the reader ever to remember, that among all the saints converted to God, I do not remember one who is a greater debtor to redeeming grace. When I consider the resistance which I made to the grace of God, and the pleasure I seemed to take in resisting, I am overwhelmed at the idea of the patience and long-suffering of God towards me, who so long opposed His Spirit by the resistance of my nature."

Mr. Valton felt similar sentiments on the same occasion. Prior to his entrance on the ministry, he wrote his experience, in six volumes ; but very much diminished his Journal amid the laborious avocations of a Methodist preacher. This defect is in some sort supplied by a synopsis of his labours and experience, in a seventh volume. He left an additional manuscript, containing an account of his life and labours for the last ten years. This volume commences by a letter to the venerable Wesley, in these words :

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE long resisted your importunate desire to give you a short account of my experience, being desirous to conceal my insignificant life till I was no longer interested in the honour or dishonour that

cometh of man. But your last letter on the subject, connected with the same opinion of Mr. Fletcher, [Vicar of Madeley,] has at length convinced me, that I owe it to God and His church. I therefore humbly submit an extract to the perusal of candid people, imploring the benediction of God to accompany it."

Mr. Valton, respecting his family, observes a delicate silence. Though they were reduced, and in a dependent state, yet we gather from several circumstances that they were the remote branches of a noble house. Some of them had been distinguished in Church and State. On the invention of printing, when valuable manuscripts were eagerly sought for the press, one of the Valtons was possessed of an ancient copy of the Greek Testament, which contained the remarkable verse on the Trinity, (1 John v. 7,) and which is denominated in our books of Biblical literature, *Codex Valtoni*. In a Compendium of Theology, by Professor F. Turretin, reprinted at Amsterdam in 1695, 4to. edition, we have the following reply to the Arians, who say that the verse was foisted into the text:—"Nay, it was extant, as St. Jerome affirms, in the most ancient Greek copies: (*Hieron. in Epist. canon.* :)"—and he notes further, copies of the best repute:—"and Erasmus confesses, it was extant in the most ancient copy of Britain, and in the most laudable editions; the copy of the Complute, of Antwerp, of Arias Montanus, of Valton, which are the best in use, have the place." *Imò in antiquissimis codicibus Græcis extitisse notat Hieron. in prologo in epist. canon.: et Erasmus fatetur, extare in codice Britannico vetustissimo; et laudatissimæ editiones Complutensis, Antuerpiensis, Ariæ Montani, Valtoni, quæ optimis codicibus usæ sunt, hunc locum habent.*

Respecting the family of the Valtons, when at Midsomer-Norton, I learned from Mrs. Rooke, that Mr. Valton had once told her in free conversation, that his father had come to England as page in the suite of George the Second.—We shall now hear his own words :—

My parents were natives of France, and of the Roman Catholic communion. They came to London in the year 1738, two years before I was born ;* so that it was my providential lot to be born and brought up in England. I was first put to a day-school to learn English ; and then removed to the school of a priest, where a French woman was employed to teach that language. During my early years I was trained to a regular attendance at the Romish chapels in London, as were also my brother and sister.

When I was nine years old, my mother took me over to Boulogne, in France, and placed me under an abbot, who had a few boarders ; giving him a particular charge to perfect me in the French language. The abbot used to say mass two or three times a week, at an adjacent chapel, and to employ two of his pupils to assist at the altar. In a while I was allowed to participate of that honour, and was not a little proud to wear a surplice. In this school I remained six months, bowing to images of wood, and stone, and wax, and imbibing the baneful potions of idolatry and superstition. My mother, now coming over, took me with her from Boulogne to Paris ; and being once in the church of Notre

* In the sixth volume he names his birth-day, November 23d, 1740. He was baptized John Francis, but never used the second name.

Dame, I was so delighted to hear the little choristers chant and sing, that I used my earnest endeavours with my mother to procure me a place among them ; and she seemed willing to comply, but had no friend in the place to procure me the situation. As the priest with whom I had been entrusted rigorously observed all the fast-days of the saints, which half-starved the boys, I shrunk at the idea of returning, and prayed my mother to have me removed. She complied, and endeavoured to place me in a convent of Jesuits. Not, however, agreeing on the terms, I was placed for three months longer at a private school, while she went to visit her friends in France. Here I can once remember with pain and praise making auricular confession, and receiving the absolution and benediction of my confessor. What a mercy that all this had not irrevocably grounded me in the errors and principles of the Romish Church, and indelibly stamped me a Papist ! But God had determined otherwise, as the sequel will show.

My mother now brought me home to London, where having been for three months, my father was persuaded to place me at a grammar-school in Yorkshire, to perfect me in the rudiments of the Latin tongue. The clergyman who was head of the school, not knowing that I had been rigorously educated a Roman Catholic, sent me to church with his own sons. And I have often marvelled that I should so readily comply. However, I can well remember that serious impressions were made very early on my mind ; but I had no one to guide me in the way that I should go.

When about thirteen years of age, the Bishop of Chester came, and confirmed between two and three hundred young persons. I attended with these, and

the bishop laid his hand on my head ; but the next day my conscience sorely reproached me, and I thought I should be damned for what I had done, having been baptized a Papist. I was sorely troubled for a time ; but it wore away.

In my fifteenth year, I happened to meet with Hervey's "Meditations;" and cast my eye on that part which treats of the resurrection of the dead. I was now sensibly affected, and resolved to amend my life, and to pray that the resurrection might be a welcome day to me. For several days I had a deep impression on my mind, and was careful not to offend God ; but, alas ! this also was soon effaced.

At seventeen years of age, I returned to London, and was placed in an academy to learn book-keeping. While here, I was appointed a clerk in the Office of Ordnance, and sent to Portsmouth ; where God, in the midst of temptations, was pleased to restrain me in an extraordinary manner.

While here, a carpenter often came to heat his glue-pot at the office-fire. He being a Methodist, the clerks used to surround the fire, to have a little diversion with him. They would say, "Well, John. is there yet any hope for us? Shall we all be damned?" This would sometimes bring on serious discourse ; but we, like the swine, trampled the pearls under our feet. He one day said, when I was out of the office, that he had some hopes of John : but though I then laughed at his words, I have since found that the bread* cast on the water was found after many days.

* לחם *Lechem*, Eccles. xi. 1, signifies corn, and all kinds of provisions, as well as bread. The reference is to the custom of husbandmen, who, after the rivers overflowed with tropical rains, waded into the retiring waters, and sowed their corn to procure an early vegetation.

After residing for two years in Portsmouth, I was removed to Greenwich, still ignorant of the things which belonged to my peace. But I had not been there long before I was ordered to embark with the army for Portugal, as clerk of the stores, and assistant to the pay-master of the artillery. Though a high martial spirit had made me a volunteer in embarkation, many fears soon assailed me, lest I should perish at sea, or fall in battle, and my soul become a prey to the worm that never dies. What a pity that the good impressions on the minds of youth should be hid so much from the eyes of the church, and escape her fostering care!

After being in Portugal for nine months, peace being restored, the army was ordered home. During my stay in that country, I became intimate with some of the priests; and having a passion for splendour, the decorations of their churches, and the brilliant dresses of their images, occasioned my frequent visits; yet the issues were, that I felt no sorrow for having escaped the "mother of harlots."

On my return to England, a desk was again assigned me at Greenwich. I had not been here long before a sore trial made me think of God, and drove me to prayer for some days. In these exercises I found happiness, and a prospect of heaven, to which I thought I was then hastening.—[This is understood to have been a love affair, which greatly affected his health, and laid the foundation of that nervous complaint which more or less followed him to the grave.]—At this time Mr. Romaine's "Sermon on the Dry Bones" providentially fell into my hands. It seemed fraught with impossibilities, that I should live conformably to what was there required, being surrounded with gay companions;

and the odious epithet of Methodist was so revolting, that my Babel religion soon fell to the ground. In short, by associating with the officers of the army, I had contracted a habit of swearing, and indeed most other vices of the army, and was become quite a libertine. For swearing I was often reproved by my friends, which happily operated in the issue in a total renunciation of that vice.

Providence, whose designations are always gracious, now interfered to remove me from a dangerous group of companions. In December, 1763, I was ordered to the king's magazines at Purfleet, to do duty there. This seemed cruel, that I, who was but just returned from foreign service, during the campaign in Portugal, should be ordered to this isolated station, while two younger clerks were allowed to stay! When I arrived, I expected to meet with a kind reception from the young engineers; in which, however, I was disappointed; and remained for some time almost a solitary stranger.

[Mrs. Weaver, mother of the venerable Mr. Weaver, clerk in the king's works at Woolwich, and local preacher, was then living at Purfleet. She told me, that Mr. Valton came there quite a gay and pleasant young gentleman; and as he excelled on the violin, they rented a room, where he played in the evenings, and the young people danced. But, she added, when he turned Methodist, we turned Methodists; and the room, which had been shut up for some time, was re-opened for prayer and reading. In a while, he procured Mr. Wesley's "Sacred Harmony," and began to use the fiddle again in teaching us these new and engaging tunes. Of the rise and progress of this work of God Mr. Valton gives the following account.]

There was at Purfleet a lady of the name of Edwards, whose husband was an officer in the king's service. Soon after my arrival, they invited me to dine, and treated me with many civilities. Mrs. E. was a member of Mr. Wesley's society in London, and the only Methodist in that part of the country. I often spent a leisure hour at their house. One evening the conversation turned on religion. I threw in my mite, probably more from complaisance than inclination: it made, however, a strong impression on her mind in my favour. This conversation became, what God willed it to be, less tiresome to me in some succeeding evenings, and I went so far as to join the family in singing hymns. This pious woman, persevering in her good designs, lent me Baxter's "Saints' Rest;" Rutherford's "Letters;" and Law's "Serious Call." By her conversation, and by the reading of these books, I began to see my soul as the moth fluttering about the flame. Fear now prompted me to pray, sometimes with, and sometimes without, a form. I left off my grosser sins, and sacrificed my accustomed amusements, as a sort of atonement for my past transgressions. To these, some little charities were added, and acts of self-denial; which I considered as highly meritorious, and as tending gradually to blot out the handwriting which stood against me in the book of God.

But, here again, this good woman, whom I may call my soul's friend, beat me with much difficulty out of these Papistical notions, which still floated in my mind, and convinced me that nothing would avail without faith in Christ; and that salvation was the free, unmerited gift of God, through the redemption that is in Him. The books I was then

reading confirmed all she said, and shone with increasing light on my beclouded mind.

I was now sorely embarrassed with notions in my head, conflicting with sins in my heart. I knew not what to do. In fact, I began to despair of salvation, and thought to recede; but this I could not well do, having, as it were, by the kindness of this family, taken the bounty-money, if I may use a military term; and to retreat now would be shameful. I could not pray with devotion; my addresses to the throne of grace were irregular and dissipated, and prayer seemed a burden. At length, encouraged by my friends, I unbosomed my whole heart to Mr. Wesley, in an anonymous letter, soliciting his advice. The answer I beg leave to transcribe for the benefit of those who may be in the same state.

“LONDON, *January 31st, 1764.*

“It is certainly right with all possible care to abstain from all outward evil. But this profits only a little. The inward change is the one thing needful for *you*. You must be born again, or you never will gain a uniform and lasting liberty. Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead,—dead to God, dead in sin. Awake, then, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only, is mere labour lost. If it could be attained, it would be little worth; for another would arise in its place. But, indeed, it cannot, before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be justified freely from all things, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. It might be of use, if you should

read over the first volume of [my] Sermons seriously, and with prayer. Indeed, nothing will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not. When you are cheerful, and when you are heavy, still pray. Pray with many or with few words, or with none at all: you will surely find an answer of peace, and why not now? I am

“Your servant, for Christ’s sake,

“J. WESLEY.”

This letter seemed fraught with impossibilities, and I should have misconstrued the whole, had not Mrs. E. explained it, and very much to my satisfaction. I now determined fully to enter into the service of the Lord of Hosts, and to seek the deliverance described in the letter. I saw now the gracious hand of God in removing me from Greenwich, and in my being unnoticed by the officers when I came to Purfleet; for had I contracted an intimacy with them, all this good might have been frustrated. Nearly at the same time, a little child, about seven years of age, came to drink tea with me: I happened to call her a little angel, and she rejoined, “O, sir, I dreamed last night that you was an angel, and that I saw you flying up into heaven, and that I called after you, but you would not stop for me; and I asked my father’s leave to come and take tea with you, that I might tell you my dream.” This little incident gave me, for a day or two, great comfort; because I received it as a token from God of what He was about to do for my soul, by fitting and preparing me for a better world; for since my trial and affliction at Greenwich, I had ceased to wish for length of life.

But all this was transient. Satan now began to

assault me with scepticism in its most dreadful forms,—that there was no God, else He would hear my prayers. I was tempted also to disbelieve the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and almost every doctrine of revelation. In short, I quarrelled with every book I read, as dark, mysterious, and irrelevant to my case.

March 6th, 1764.—I was to-day very unhappy, and thought that God had abandoned me. I sought for a form of prayer, but could find none that suited me. At last I drew up a form, partly out of the Prayer-Book, and partly out of Dr. Horneck's "Happy Ascetic," which I used for a few days; and then laid it aside, as not uttering the language of my heart. I now prayed, sometimes with words, and sometimes with none. But when I could utter a few words, I had sometimes a gleam of hope from an overclouded sun.

In the evening, a religious young man came to spend an hour at Mr. Edwards's, and I was invited to meet him. He related his experience, which very much agreed with mine, while groping the way to peace of conscience, as it were, over a dark mountain. We spent the evening in very profitable conversation, and closed with singing and prayer. I never, in all my life, enjoyed such happiness as this evening afforded me. I came home, and offered up my addresses to Heaven with an unusual flow of words. My prayers were interrupted only with tears, the effect of heartfelt joy. I could have spent the whole night in praising God: my pillow was easy, and when I awoke in the morning I arose and prostrated myself before the God that never sleeps.

11th.—This day being the Sabbath, I attended the morning service at church; and prayed very earnestly

to God. In the afternoon, I spent some time with Mr. Cawley, a carpenter, who had come from London, partly with a view to inquire after the welfare of my soul. Before I had been half an hour in his company, I loved the man, and became united to him in spirit. Alexander the Great once told Diogenes, that if he were not Alexander the Great, he would desire to be Diogenes. But I could have said, I would rather be Mr. Cawley than Diogenes. We closed the interview with singing and prayer. Yet neither singing nor praying has any lasting effect to raise my mind. I ever sink back into that nervous gloom to which my constitution is inclined. My petrified heart seems unwilling that a tear should drop from my eye. Nay, such was the apathy I now felt, that had my relations been bleeding at my feet, I think it would not have moved me. I sometimes thought that God had entirely given me up.

On relating my feelings to my good mother, I observed that she shed tears. She assured me that I should soon receive comfort, notwithstanding the agonies of my mind. She encouraged me to look to the Saviour, adding that "the vilest sinner should never despair." These last words reached my heart, and caused the tears plentifully to flow from my eyes. My heart swelled, and my eyes so overflowed, that I left the house; a spark of celestial fire now kindled in my breast, which dispelled the gloom, melted the rock, and diffused Divine love through all my heart. My soul exclaimed, "What acknowledgments shall I make to Thee, O Fountain of Divine love, for Thy goodness to a worm! How incomprehensible is Thy love to sinners, and how ready art Thou to forgive, and to meet them when they return! How inexcusable am I to distrust Thy goodness, seeing every

object around me proclaims Thy goodness and love ! ”

In the afternoon of this blessed day, I found the river of joy swelling in my breast by the influence of the heavenly shower. The Sun of Righteousness has indeed risen on my soul with genial warmth, and called forth the enlivened seeds of gratitude. I was not disobedient to the heavenly influences, but instantly on my knees acknowledged the blessing, and prayed that the Lord would no more hide His face from me, but pardon my impatience, my pride, and unbelief. I could now bless God for the hidings of His face for my peevishness and distrustful reasonings ; for I found that without His gracious restriction, I should sink back into all the bad habits of my fellow-sinners.

In prayer also, I found that God had now loosened my tongue : I could pour out my soul, and speak as the Spirit gave me utterance. I could now pray that the Lord would grant me such of my petitions as tended to the welfare of my soul, and at such times as He saw best.

21st.—My soul for the last three days has been gradually sinking ; but to-day the strong man rose upon me with uncommon violence. I discovered anew the latent evils of my breast. I felt pride, repining, and discontent. Ah ! how is it that I, who but the other day had such overflowing peace and joy, should now sink so low !—“ Ah ! little did I think,” exclaimed I, in my anguish, “ that religion would bring me to this ! Surely I never found evil passions so predominant in my career of worldly pleasure. Well, I shall now lay religion aside ! ” These were my words. But I reflected that I never found any real pleasure or lasting good in the

world; and to return to it would be but to increase my misery in this world, and endless torments in that which is to come. A faint hope now shone upon me, that faith and hope would yet again spring up in my mind.

While in this weak and depressed state, I was asserting something of importance, which was disbelieved by the person to whom I spoke: I felt great anger,—*et ira est furor*,—and called God twice or thrice to witness the truth of what I said, and, in the agony of my mind, silently vowed to abandon religion. O, how I was stung with my own words! I was like a madman. I dropped on my knees to pray; but could not. I fell prostrate, but could not remain so; fearing lest God should strike me dead, and send me to everlasting fire. I could scarcely stand all the day, I was so greatly affected. I could but remark the difference in my feelings between this and the former conflict, after offending God. Then I was all apathy; nothing moved me: now everything heaped a mountain on my depressed spirits. I wished to hide myself in some dark retreat, being burdened with the light of the sun. At night I ventured to pray, but without much hope. In the morning I was much the same. However, about eleven o'clock the Lord gave me a token of His love and goodness in my heart. I exclaimed, "O God, let me never more offend Thee by anger, nor despair of Thy mercy and love; but be always resigned to Thy gracious will!"

April 6th.—I went to London, and called on a gentleman, to whom I had once written on business, to direct me to hear a sermon. While I was there, Mr. Mark Davis (then stationed in town) came in, and I accompanied him to Wapping, and told him

all my heart and state. I hid myself in this small and rough-looking chapel under the pulpit; and though much annoyed with the people's coughing and noise, yet I was delighted with the discourse on "Quench not the Spirit." It seemed to be wholly on my account. How happy are the Methodists who have ministers that know how to speak a word to him that is weary!

Sunday, 8th.—I attended at West-Street, Seven Dials [bought for a chapel in the Establishment since the purchase and rebuilding of Queen-Street chapel]. The great decorum and strict attention of the congregation inspired me with reverence and awe. The unaffected piety, the correct, uniform, and decent responses of the people, were very moving, and I may say to me, as a stranger, astonishing. The singing was heavenly, and seemed to come from the heart. In the evening, I attended at the Foundery, (Mr. Wesley's first chapel,) and heard an excellent sermon, which stirred me up to press towards the mark for the prize of my high calling; and should have found more good if I could have retired for prayer; but, lodging with a great family, I had no opportunity. How favoured are the Methodists, to enjoy such ordinances and sermons as these! And yet my heart, my vain heart, is afraid to have it known that I am become a Methodist.

22d.—To-day I went to Snow's-Fields chapel to hear Mr. Maxfield, and stayed the sacrament, but found the enemy so harassing my mind with temptations, that the reasonings with him took away much of the good. The sermon, however, was very affecting, and kept me in tears most of the time. Surely these are workmen who know their work, and know the hearts of men!

30th.—Though I have been in a good frame of mind the last few days, I now found a return of old temptations. It has been my method at those times to fall down on my knees and pray; that being the most advantageous posture in which to resist the enemy.

May 3d.—To-day, Mrs. Edwards being sick, the severest trial of all my life came upon me: I was forbidden to go to the house of my soul's friend, the blessed mother in Israel, who, under God, had been the instrument of saving my soul. The enemy, for some weeks, had been stirring up the mind of Mr. E. against me. He was determined to prohibit my access to his house, and had for some weeks been secretly and openly defaming me; and in such sort, that the gentlemen in the king's service despised me. Among the rest, he accused me of insanity, and thought that my religious conversation and prayers contributed to augment the rheumatic fever and affliction of his wife. "They laid things to my charge that I knew not of."

I went to my room full of anguish, and of the most horrible temptations. I spent the whole night in prayer, sometimes on the floor, sometimes on the bed. The reproaches of the ungodly brought all my sins to my remembrance, and seemed to overwhelm me with a sense of the wrath of God. While in prayer, the Almighty seemed clothed with angry aspects, and with thunder in his hand. Meanwhile the Saviour presented Himself in His priestly garments, interceding for my soul. For a time the Almighty seemed inexorable, but at length dropped His vengeful arm, as though He had said,

"My Son is in my servant's prayer,
And Jesus forces Me to spare."

This view of God and the mediatorial throne continued with me for several days, and was followed with much peace.

4th.—This day, by acute pains, Mrs. Edwards became delirious. The gout having reached her stomach, she was not expected to live; and, I believe, her affliction was much augmented by the grief of her mind. My prayer was, that God would not separate us, but cut short His work in me, and take me to the realms of bliss, whither I thought she was going. About ten o'clock I retired, and wrestled with the Lord, that He would ease her pain, and remove her delirium: and it pleased the Almighty that very hour to grant what I asked; which greatly increased my faith, and strengthened my hands in prayer. From this time also, Mr. E. seemed reconciled to me. Perhaps it was the affliction of his wife which made him so angry with me; but, Lord, what is man?

10th.—To-day I also was taken ill, and feared lest I should lose my senses. Great trials always augment the infirmities to which my constitution is inclined. I spent most of the morning in prayer, and in much distress of mind. A plot had been laid to get me removed back to Greenwich, among all my old and wicked companions. Providentially, I was enabled so to remonstrate as to break the snare. I have, in this instance, realized the note of Mr. Wesley, Matt. iv. 1; that after the strongest consolations we may expect the sharpest temptations.

15th.—This being the Sabbath-day, I met Mr. Watkins at the church-door, an officer who had served with me in Portugal. I was ashamed to say that I had turned Methodist; and yet I durst not let him go without telling him of the danger his

soul was in. The ship was lying off Purfleet, in which he was going out to Peniscola. I took him to dine. Our conversation soon made him ready to exclaim, with the gaoler, "What must I do to be saved?" We wept and prayed together, and sung hymns. He told me that he had a strong conflict, as the ship was to sail that evening, whether he should venture ashore to take leave of me; but something unaccountably said within him, "I must see him; I must see him." I gave him all Mr. Wesley's Sermons and Notes, and other books that I had, accompanied him about a mile, and was fully persuaded that God, who had begun a good work in his soul, would finish it to the day of Christ. My soul was knit to him in affection, as the soul of David to Jonathan.—After parting from him, I cried, "O Lord, the Keeper of Israel, into Thy hands I commend him. Save and defend him, that he may renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and be a true follower of the Lamb!"—From this time, I felt an unaccountable desire for the salvation of souls, and resolved to speak to individuals whenever I could find opportunity. A little fruit encourages the labours of the husbandman.

July 14th.—I went to London to hear Mr. Charles Wesley on the ensuing Sabbath. His word was with power; and I thought my Saviour was at hand, never being so sensibly affected under a discourse before. In the evening, I heard him again at the Foundery, and all seemed to be comforted or affected by his word. On returning, I lost much of the good by joining rather than reproving the discourse of the passengers. My conscience severely accuses if I join in any unhallowed levity of conversation. Surely my heart is a composition of sin, at enmity with

God, and subject to the prince of this world, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

31st.—My father and my brother paid me a visit to-day, and my mind was much hurt by their conversation. My poor father inquired, whether I did not sing Whitefield's hymns; assuring me, at the same time, that if I followed the Methodists, I might never more expect preferment. My brother is altogether averse to religion, especially to Methodism. The way is too narrow.

August 4th.—This morning, in consequence of reading certain books, I was more strongly tempted to believe in absolute predestination than ever; and to believe also, on account of the evils in my heart, that I was one of the reprobates. In the course of the day, I named these thoughts to a friend, who replied, "If predestination be true, you ought to rejoice and be happy, because, being convinced of sin, you have one of the first marks of being elected." This afforded me a momentary comfort. But, ah! I sink again into anguish and pain, and cannot believe that there is one saint in glory that ever was so wicked as I have been. Yet, bad as I am, the price which my Redeemer has paid is such as the Father can accept: therefore I am encouraged to believe, that I shall yet have a place in glory at the Saviour's feet.

12th.—This morning I had sweet communion with God on my way to the church. But, on thinking what I should say at night, when five of us met for Christian fellowship, several pertinent texts came into my mind. Here, again, Satan stirred up the latent pride of my heart. This may arise chiefly from my evil nature; but, from whatever source it may spring, it seems to contaminate all my thoughts,

and words, and actions. I have not read or heard of anyone who has had such sore and bitter conflicts with the evils of nature, and the temptations of Satan, as have fallen to my lot. Perhaps the Lord is, by these conflicts, forcing me from seeking to be justified by the law, or preparing me to be useful to others. This thought gave me comfort.

15th.—This morning Satan seemed to concentrate all his heavy artillery against my soul, in a way he had never done since I began to seek the heavenly kingdom. Pride appeared also in its strongest forms. I was shocked at the aspects of the temptation; and, falling down on my knees, resolved to surrender myself wholly into the arms of God,—that, if He would save me, I would resist no more. Presently my eyes were bathed in tears; and now a concurring thought seemed to say within, that this was the very thing I ought to do.

16th.—This was to me a happy day. I went to the office, having shaken off my legal chains, and sought no more to fulfil the law in my own strength. Leaning on my Saviour, I felt Divine support, and entered on duty without fearing the seductive habits of company. I was obliged indeed to be social; but all the while I was happy in God. He kept me as a little child, and showed me that I knew nothing as I ought to know. Here was a lesson I had never learned before.

17th.—This was a sore morning of temptation to my soul. "Ay," said the enemy, "you are now become light and trifling." A messenger of Satan was allowed to buffet me with all the reasonings and excitements to unbelief. I walked the room in a state of distraction. My cry was, "Save, Lord, or

I perish." My soul chose strangling rather than life; and, had not the Lord been on my side, I had fallen a prey to the enemy.

31st.—During the whole of the last fortnight, I have passed through deep waters. Satan takes great and grievous advantages of the nervous infirmities of my constitution. He upbraids me with my past sins as a monster of wickedness; and tells me that all my religious intercourse with the friends is pride, hypocrisy, and deceit. If at any time I have enjoyed what they call "the drawings of the Father," he then assails me, that I am become light, trifling, and vain. Often I am assaulted to renounce religion altogether, and give up myself to despair.

Saturday, September 1st.—This morning I was greatly comforted in reading the Holy Scriptures; and going to London, I heard Mr. Wesley for the first time. Next morning I heard him at Snow's Fields, on Matt. iii. 2: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He observed, that the unawakened sinner is under the power of evil, and sin prevails; the justified has grace and sin, but grace prevails. He thence proceeded to show the necessity of having the kingdom of heaven set up in our hearts, in order to sanctification. O, how much I was blessed by hearing this discourse! I heard him again at Spitalfields, and twice received the sacrament to-day.

In the latter sermon, on 2 Kings v. 12, I was pleased with his criticism on Naaman's words. He said, that our versions contained an egregious blunder, in reading verse 18 in the future instead of the past tense. It should be, "When thy servant *hath gone* into the house of Rimmon, and *hath bowed*,"

&c.* His conscience accused him of worshipping an idol, instead of the God of the whole earth.

3d.—I attended preaching at the Foundery at five o'clock, and at ten a friend took me to Miss Marsh's meeting for Christian communion. The friends spoke their experience, and they greatly encouraged me by giving their opinion that I was in a justified state. At the close of the meeting, Mr. Maxfield [whom a good bishop had ordained, to prevent Mr. Wesley from preaching himself to death] administered the sacrament. While they prayed, I thought the Lord gave me the witness of His Holy Spirit.

[Miss Marsh was a lady of good education; and, having a small independent fortune, devoted her life, and all she had, in doing good. She sometimes made excursions to Bristol, and other parts of the country, where she met classes, &c.]

25th.—Since the 8th of this month, I have been confined to my room by a fever; but, by the grace of God, I am recovered. O, how good and gracious was the Lord to me in my affliction! My temptations were suspended. My cry was, "Father, take me to Thyself!" I had a longing desire to depart, and be with Christ. I had no doubt but that I should see and enjoy the Lord for ever. God gave me such tokens of His love, that I could not be silent. I once exclaimed, in the words of Addison, "Come, see a Christian die."

In the beginning of this affliction I had examined my heart, and seen myself as deserving the heaviest wrath of God, and knew not how to escape; but instantly I found a trust in Christ, which I thought would keep me from perdition. Satan again assaulted me with predestination. For six or eight hours my

* Dr. John Lightfoot makes the same remark

conflicts, accompanied by many tears, were so great, that the sweat ran down me like water ; but from this time I began to recover.

30th.—To-day I came to London, but much harassed with the thought that I was flying from persecution, and leaving the cross behind. My design was to get food for my soul ; and I was much blessed under Mr. Richardson's sermon, as also under Mr. Olivers's prayer.

October 16th.—I have had a relapse of my fever for the last ten days ; but while under the chastisement of my heavenly Father, my mind was kept in peace. I tasted much of His presence and love in my affliction, and felt a longing desire to depart, to be with Christ. I have held fast the promises in this illness, and wait to see them fully accomplished.

17th.—I went to see my father, and found him low and dejected. He said it was chiefly occasioned by my being turned a Methodist ; for my patrons would hear of it, and cast me off to provide for myself. I told him, that since the late change in my views, I durst not now spend my time and money in taverns and theatres. I now neither dared to swear, nor lie, nor commit the least known sin. I asked, if he found me less obedient, or affectionate, or in anything altered for the worse. He was silent, and seemed satisfied with my defence.

18th.—I was this evening admitted into the band-meeting, and was much blessed in hearing those pious and holy souls who have long walked in the way speak their experience. I went also to another meeting, where the Lord's supper was administered, as before.

23d.—This day I returned to Purfleet, much refreshed and strengthened in my soul. Glory be to

Thee, O God! Do Thou, O Lord, preserve my soul when I am distant from the Shepherd's tent! Supply from Thy fountain such wisdom and knowledge as my soul may need; and make me a faithful steward of Thy bounty, whether temporal or spiritual, that I may freely give of Thy store, conformably to the designs of Thy providence.

November 7th.—The Lord was pleased to suffer my ague and fever to return, and sometimes to be accompanied with delirium: a disease which affects many in these low and marshy grounds. I have not been able to keep my thoughts stayed on the Lord, but have comforted myself with the thought, that I was in the wilderness state described in Mr. Wesley's sermon: and yet, all do not pass through that state to the promised land. I have also been much tempted to doubt of the pardoning love of God which I received while in London. Because it was not incontestably clear, I feared it was not really the case; and that my comforts were only the drawings of the Father.

20th.—My fever and ague still continue, and my inward conflicts and temptations are unabated: I could scarcely think of God; nay, I seemed angry with Him, because He had not favoured me as some others who had not sought Him half so long. I felt also many sins and foolish desires rising in my heart, but did not give way to them. My mind, however, was greatly relieved in hearing Mr. Wesley, on Luke xxii. 31, 32, in which he showed how Satan was allowed of God to sift His children, as wheat, that the chaff might be blown away. I saw that I had undergone that sifting, and much in the same manner as Mr. Wesley had described. I was, indeed, much edified when I heard that other believers

had been assailed with the horrid temptations which had long pursued me.

21st.—This morning my soul was very happy in prayer, though my fever still continued. And when I am thus happy in God, my bowels most yearn after the souls of poor sinners. I have collected a few of these to attend our evening meetings, and pray and talk to them for two or three hours together, notwithstanding my fever. They have not been able to resist my words, but melt and weep under my feeble exhortation. While thus arguing and pleading with them, and seeing them unable to resist my words, I have myself found surprising comfort and joy; and my memory has become so retentive, that pertinent texts have poured in upon me with uncommon light and force.

December 2d.—This day I read over Bishop Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living," and fell down on my knees, praying that God would forgive all the loose speeches and slanders of my tongue. The book enlightened my conscience with regard to many of my sins. While in Portugal, I had wronged my deputy of £23. Had he complained to the Board, it is probable that they would have given it in my favour. But I was not sure that they would not have given it against me. No matter; though several years had elapsed, my conscience now compelled me to pay him the money.

Sunday, 9th.—Mr. Windsor met our little class in Purfleet. He was lively, and his words were blessed to us all. His words indicated earnestness of soul, strength of faith, and ardour of love. He greatly assisted me in the method of pouring out my soul to God; and he was the instrument of many blessings conferred upon me, particularly in his method of

thanksgiving in certain parts of his prayers : no wonder that David should delight in the society of saints.

Next day, in reading Mark xi., the 24th verse was much blessed to me. I said, "Lord, I do believe that all Thy promises shall be fulfilled to me." And, indeed, in that hour it was given me to believe with the heart unto righteousness. God truly blessed my soul ; and left not the least doubt of His then fulfilling His promise. The power of God rested so strongly on my soul, that I felt my bosom glow with love ; and was ready to say, "Lord, it is enough. If Thou givest more, take me to Thyself !" The Lord is merciful and gracious. He will not chide for ever. He makes us to hear joy and gladness, and causes the bones which He had broken to rejoice. O my soul, remember His marvellous works, that in all future temptations thou mayest trust in Him !

11th.—This morning the Lord was pleased to give me fresh tokens of His love. He overwhelmed me with His goodness, and I felt that I could love Him because He had first loved me. My prayer was, that He would renew me in His Divine image, create in me a clean heart, and bring in His everlasting righteousness. Truly, He has heard my prayer when I had continually evil thoughts, and took pleasure in many of them. I told those things to Mr. Windsor, and was much encouraged when he said that believers in general were assailed in the same way. I named also a temptation to pride : after giving an exhortation, I had overheard a hearer say, "What a wonderful young man is that ! I hope God will bless him."

21st.—My happiness has continued till to-day, when, alas ! while talking to a man about the wolves in Portugal, I dropped a word which was not

strictly true, with regard to my having seen those wolves. It was in a moment of confusion caused by his questions. I sighed and groaned most of the day for pardon; and next day felt my peace return, but not with the faith and confidence I had before. Thanks be to God, however, that this year, which began with so much bitterness and anguish, ends with days of sunshine and peace!

January 1st, 1765.—O Lord, do Thou grant that this year may be productive of universal holiness, and that all nations may acknowledge the Saviour of men. In an especial manner, do Thou bless us of this nation; and make us a holy nation, a peculiar people. Let peace be within our walls, and righteousness in our dwellings. Fill our hearts with love, and let our lives show forth Thy praise. Continue to us the means of grace, and grant that we may never provoke Thee to withdraw Thy favours. Glory be to Thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

O my soul, stay upon thy Saviour, and hang upon His word: is it not music to thy ear, and health to thy bones? Last year, at this time, thou sawest no beauty in thy Saviour, nor comeliness that thou shouldest desire Him: nay, thou didst despise and reject Him. Thou didst account His life folly and misery below. But now, O my soul, go forth with the voice of singing, and declare His righteousness to the ends of the earth. The Lord hath redeemed thee, and plucked thee as a brand from the burning. He hath brought thee out of darkness into marvellous light, and given "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

5th.—Two days ago I felt much encouragement while praying for the prosperity of our little class;

and this morning the Lord seemed to receive my prayers when I besought Him for my relatives in London and in France.

21st.—This evening, being in London, I attended the bands, and happened to sit on the next bench to Mr. Wesley and the preachers. His eye caught me; and he asked me, whether I found it good to attend the means of grace. I answered in the affirmative. He inquired again, whether I did not feel an anxious desire after preferment. I rejoined, "No;" my one desire being to love God. I then sat down; but was much harassed that I had not spoken my experience. The truth is, I was not then so happy as I had been in the beginning of the year. But O! before the meeting closed, I was much comforted to hear two or three souls praise God, and tell of His marvellous grace. O Lord, hasten the time when I shall praise Thee without ceasing, and when all my heart "shall be holiness to the Lord!" What avails it that Thou hast pardoned my sins, if Thou dost not renew me in Thy image, and give me that mind that was in Christ!

"Give me Thy only love to know,
Give me Thy only love!"

February 3d.—I have spent a comfortable hour with two or three persons who have a desire to save their souls. But pride began to rise in my heart from what one said of me. Alas! it mixes itself with all I do. It is neither decent nor wise to praise men to their face. I was buffeted also with hypocrisy, for talking of the love of God, when I felt but little of it in my heart. Yet my conscience acquits me of doing this to seek the praise of men.

6th—I rose this morning at my usual hour, before

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6th—I rose this morning at my usual hour, before

five o'clock, and read the lessons and Psalms, and a sermon by Mr. Wesley; which course I now always pursue. It happened to be the sermon on the witness of the Spirit. Some things in it staggered me, because I could hardly say that it was my experience. However, after reading, I went to prayer, and was much comforted.

7th.—To-day I wrote to my father, and gave him an account of the change which grace had wrought in my heart. I ventured also to point out to him some prominent errors of the Church of Rome. And being very happy in the love of God, I wrote also to Mr. Windsor, at whose band-meeting my soul had been much refreshed.

27th.—I have been in a deplorable state of mind for some days past, and felt all my former peevishness return. O my nature! my nature! I really believe, had not God directed me to the sermon of Mr. Wesley, on "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices," my spirit would have failed before the Lord, and I should have given up my hope as lost. My unholy tempers, and the men with whom I have to do, make me cry for entire renovation of heart.

March 6th.—I have been exceedingly tried and tempted for the last four days. I have been too dead to God; and if I trifle but for a moment, I receive condemnation. The voice of God, by the secret influence of His Holy Spirit, warns me of the least danger. It seems as though the Lord were calling me off from terrestrial things to close communion with Himself. Lord, I bless Thee, that Thou hast put it into my heart to pray for this; and hast discovered to me my utter helplessness, that without Thee I can do nothing.

I have lately read in "the Christian Library" a.

treatise on Fasting, by Robert Bolton ; a holy minister, and a skilful surgeon. It is either by fasting twice a week, or by early rising, that I am so weak as not to kneel upright in prayer for any length of time. If it proceed from the latter, I am sure it will be a far heavier trial to lie in bed than to rise at an early hour.

10th.—I heard Mr. Wesley preach a charity sermon at Spitalfields chapel, for the benefit of the poor weavers. He observed, that by giving one pound the Methodists might gain ten, and stir up the Church of England to charities. At night he kept a lovefeast, and was in great spirits. Next morning he was about to set out on his long journey to the north of England and Scotland, till October. I believe there were few dry eyes in the place. My prayer was, "O Lord God, do Thou accompany him wheresoever Thou shalt call him; and make Thy face to shine upon him! Do Thou give him a mouth, and wisdom, that none of his adversaries shall be able to gainsay or resist; and receive him at last to Thy kingdom of glory!"

16th.—This morning I made a bold, I do not say a wise, request to God: I asked, having a strong sensibility of His presence in my soul, that He would finish His work, and take me out of the world to my Redeemer's kingdom. The request was followed with so much peace and joy, that I thought He was about to take me away. O, with what rapture did I anticipate dying! My hope was full of immortality. I could sing the pilgrim's hymn with delight. I want no foot of land, (unless it be under ground,) nor wife, nor children, nor honours, nor pleasures, nor preferments, nor any creature. Christ supplies all these to me, and ten thousand times more.

21st.—I have not been so happy for the last three days as I was before. Notwithstanding, a friend to whom I had unbosomed my state, said, he believed that I had received the abiding witness of the Spirit. I believed his words, and felt happy; and prostrating myself before the Lord, I felt abundant joy to overflow my heart. But, alas! in the midst of my joys, a man from Greenwich came on business to spend the evening with me. His conversation was loose, jocular, and carnal, and much mixed with profane swearing. I often tried to divert the conversation to better subjects, but failed in courage to reprove him. O, how I was condemned for allowing him to take the name of God in vain, almost in every sentence! The Holy Spirit spoke once, yea, twice; but I did not obey the heavenly Monitor. When he was gone, a cloud was left on my mind; and I besought a pardon with cries and tears. Having to breakfast with him next morning at an inn, I prayed the Lord to restrain him from those shameful words; and, blessed be the Lord, I do not remember that he swore once all the time I was with him.

April 5th.—This being Good Friday, I fasted till near six in the evening. O that I had abstained also from sin! But in the course of the day I gave way to anger against a person; and it was nearly an hour before I could recover an even temperature of mind. O Lord, I fall every moment without Thy special support. Root out of my heart every plant which is not of Thy planting! Sometimes, when I have been delivered from a temptation, I have thought that I would never distrust the Lord again. I find, however, that if Satan be driven from one retreat, he enters at another, and laughs at human resolutions.

7th.—This being Easter-day, I had a gracious season at the Lord's table; for the Lord was in the means. In the afternoon I was both comforted and tempted. I have often thought that the Lord would send me out to publish His Gospel to perishing sinners; and yet I know I have not gifts for it, but am aware that I have pride enough; and, I believe, zeal, but fear it is not "according to knowledge." I prayed for humility, and that God would never suffer me to speak in His name, no, not even privately, in my own spirit, or wisdom, or knowledge. Are there not murderers enough of souls already? Surely there are special receptacles in hell for false teachers. These are the armour-bearers of Satan, the captains of his thousands. What a blow he strikes at the kingdom of Christ when he gets one of these into commission!

25th.—O, how has the fear of losing my leg by amputation tormented me for the last four days! [Mr. Valton told me, that the complaint in his ankle came at first with a chilblain. The complaint seemed to go away, and he walked for twenty years without any appearance of lameness. Sea-bathing was recommended as an antidote. However, in the course of thirty years, the bone became carious, and ultimately, after suffering the severest pains, it occasioned his death.]

28th.—Mr. Windsor paid us another visit, and met us at Mr. Healey's. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend." When in company with good men, all my fears and nervous agitations vanish away.

Saturday, May 4th.—I went up to town to hear the Gospel, and spend the Sabbath in the Divine ordinances. In the passage-boat, there were three

common women. The miserable creatures swore bitterly ; and one of them addressed herself to me, —from what motive I will not judge. I lifted up my heart to God for a word in season, and watched an opportunity to lay before them the greatness of their danger. I had scarcely begun to speak before one of them was pricked in her conscience. Another, the most daring of the three, was obliged to leave the cabin. The third wept once and again. I advised her to beg her bread, with assurance that in six months the Lord would direct her into a way of getting an honest livelihood.

6th.—Being in company with Mr. Henton, a preacher, he asked me if I had now the love of God in my heart. I answered, that the Lord was very gracious to me; thereby evading a direct answer, because my evidence of the direct witness was not clear. O Lord, why do I thus doubt? If I am Thy child, send forth Thy blessed Spirit to bear witness with mine, that I may unceasingly cry, Abba, Father! What variety of changes occurs in my Christian warfare! Now borne aloft on the wings of faith, and then cast down with doubts: now one sin pushing sorely at me, and then another: one while the soul rapt up into the third heaven, and then grovelling in the dust: one day experiencing much of the Divine life, and then doubting whether it be a real work of grace. O, happy are they who experience a permanent sense of the Divine favour, and can rejoice in assurance of glory, notwithstanding the daily exercises and temptations of life.

11th.—O, how dead and lifeless have I been for these few days, and yet no way troubled about it! My thoughts were dissipated, my confessions unfeeling, my repentance verbal. I fear I have lost the

substance of religion, and scarcely hold the shadow. I have often said, that if I lost ground or abated my earnestness, I should be the most miserable being alive. In this I was mistaken. It is now plain to me that we may fall away, and yet not lay it to heart. It must be, O Lord, of Thy tender mercy, and unwillingness to part with a child of Thine, that Thou layest, as the last effort of Thy Spirit, trouble and heaviness on his mind, and sendest a blast on all his endeavours, that peradventure he may recollect himself, and return to Thee again.

19th.—This evening, about six o'clock, I was at prayer, and felt so lifeless and forlorn, that I resolved not to go to the class. My eyes were swollen with weeping, and I thought my friends were no way likely to quicken me. However, after prayer, I set out, and had a refreshing time. A woman expressed a desire to meet with us; and next day her husband came, and related how he had attended the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Romaine, and Mr. Madan in London, but had lost his good impressions by coming to Purfleet, and leaving the means of grace. She had opposed the truth in London; but now they both seem in earnest with God. Three are now added to our little flock. I read and prayed with them, and left them happier than I was myself.

June 1st.—Company coming from London, I was aware that they would expect me to dine with them; and doubting how I could do it with safety, I hid myself in a garret for prayer. At length I resolved to set out for London; but the tide would not permit. In the evening, after calling the names of the labourers, I found a note requesting my attendance at the inn. So I was obliged to go; and had

not been in their company long before they began to drink filthy toasts : I avoided drinking them. At length, they called upon me to give mine. This, also, I refused. One of the company gave a toast for me, and insisted on my drinking it. This, blessed be God, I refused, and took my leave. One of my most intimate acquaintances followed me, and entreated that I would not estrange myself from all my friends. Another of my old friends followed me ; and seeing my views were changed, he very much approved of my steady adherence to my religious principles. Thus, through the blessing of God, my soul escaped, as a bird from the snare of the fowler.

Sunday, June 9th.—A small party of us, taking our dinners in our pockets, walked to Bexley, to hear the good vicar, the Rev. Mr. Piers. He was one of the first clergymen that opened their churches to Mr. Wesley, and gave him the right hand of fellowship.* He preached an excellent sermon to a dull congregation, on Paul's description of charity. In the afternoon we walked to Wellen, and heard one of Mr. Wesley's preachers.

15th.—Three weeks ago, I went to the shop to

* The first Conference was held at Bristol, in the year 1744 ; attended by six clergymen, and four lay preachers ; viz., Messrs. J. and C. Wesley, Henry Piers, John Hodges, Samuel Taylor, John Meriton ; and the lay preachers were, Thomas Maxfield, Thomas Richards, John Bennet, and John Downs. In 1747 the fourth Conference was held in London, when Mr. Piers was again present ; and he continued his attachment to the end of life. I joined a maternal great-grandson of his in the Dartford society, in 1817. Mr. P. incurred the common odium of Methodism. When preaching at the Visitation at Sevenoaks, about the middle of the discourse the arch-deacon walked out, and all the clergymen followed ; but the congregation stayed to the end.

visit our carpenter, who had lately joined the class ; and last night I was present at his departure, I would hope, to glory. He was cut off by a fever, in seven days. On being taken ill, he sent for me, and said he knew that his Redeemer lived. I doubted of this, as he had a quarrel with his neighbour. He bewailed his hasty temper, and I got them reconciled ; and they received the sacrament together. A day or two before his death, he said, " What reason I have to bless God that I ever saw you ! ay, to love you better than my own father : " with many other feeling words. Yet I was suspicious that the wound was only slightly healed ; not so by me, for I preached the law to him, and applied but few Gospel promises, and prayed a whole day for his salvation.

21st.—I went again to London, that I might enjoy Christian fellowship in the classes and bands, and hear the word of God. Next day I paid a visit to my father. Alas ! how often did he take the name of God and Christ in vain in ordinary conversation ! How strong must that infatuation be, when one who lives in gross sin can be assured of his salvation, because he fancies that he belongs to the true church ; and that another, who prays and strives, cannot be saved, because he is not of his faith !

On Monday, 24th, I heard Mr. Jones,* on Matthew iii. 8, 9. While expounding John the

* Mr. John Jones was a medical man, of good learning and great abilities. When Erasmus, a Greek bishop, was in London, Mr. Wesley advised Mr. Jones to get ordained, that he might assist at the altar. But Mr. Charles, denying the validity of this ordination, would not allow him to officiate. The issues were, that Mr. Jones procured ordination from the Bishop of London, and was afterwards made vicar of Harwich, where he closed his career.

Baptist's sermon to the Scribes and Pharisees, a man wept aloud, and went out. We got him into the vestry, and prayed with him. My soul, blessed be the Lord, was much refreshed during this visit.

July 9th.—This morning Jesus did anew most sweetly reveal Himself to my soul. "All His garments smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia." I could rejoice in His salvation. Yet in the midst of these manifestations, it would be suggested that I was under a delusion. How was it possible that I should be so happy in the love of God, whose heart was so wicked! Notwithstanding, I have strong assurances, that if the Lord take me out of the world, my departure shall be full of peace and joy. I can anticipate dying with great delight.

25th.—This morning brother Weaver came to tell me, with tears of joy, that he believed he had found the Lord last evening, after he went home from the class. We kneeled down to thank the Lord. My soul participated in his felicity. I exhorted him to hold it fast: we embraced, and parted; I being in haste to go to Chelmsford assizes. This intelligence did amazingly cheer and refresh me on the journey.

[About this time, Mr. Valton began to study physic, that he might give away medicine to certain poor people, who could not employ a medical man. He began also to instruct one or more of the children, by hearing their lessons at convenient hours. Here follows a plan how his day was spent.]

My present practice is, to rise at five, my constitution not allowing me to rise earlier. Before I dress, I offer up a short ejaculatory address to God. When dressed, I pray for nearly half an hour, and read the morning lessons, and a few pages of some other book. Sometimes I substitute one of the

Epistles. When my scholar comes, we read the Psalms, verse for verse, and then use Mr. Wesley's form of prayer (abridged and modified from Mr. Joseph Alleine). Before eight, I pray in few words to God; and at nine I read another chapter, and sing a hymn, and then go to prayer. At twelve, after the office-hours, I offer up a short prayer, imploring forgiveness of the sins of the day, and that God would preserve me the remainder of the day. I then hear my scholar, and add a few short petitions. At one o'clock, I dine; and then with my scholar read the evening Psalm, and at three utter a short prayer. At five, my scholar and I pray for pardon and protection during the night. At six, I confess the sins of the day, and implore a pardon. I then attend some meeting, or walk. At eight, I use Mr. Wesley's form, in order to aid me the more in praying for others. I generally go to bed immediately after nine, when my prayer is but short, and presently fall asleep. Such is my daily walk with God, but much interrupted by journeys and business.

Yesterday I had a remarkable answer to prayer. A week ago, the soldier and his wife complained in the class, that they had no place of retirement for prayer; and that they were exposed to much ungodly language in the barrack. I was affected with their case, and led to assure them that the Lord would provide them a place; and yesterday the surgeon came to me in a considerable degree of warmth, some things having been stolen from the hospital: he insisted that the woman should be displaced. This enabled me to give the key of the room to the soldier's wife, where she and her husband could often retire for prayer.

August 17th.—This day I had a special trial, to humble my soul: one of the workmen under my care gave me very abusive language; and yet I did not report him, lest it should be prejudicial to his bread. It harassed me all the day; meanwhile, I prayed for him, and felt nothing contrary to love.

21st.—This morning I had a propitious hour, while at morning prayer. My soul was exceedingly happy in God. I thought I could now say, "Father, not my will, but Thine, be done." O Lord Jesus, I give Thee my body, and soul, and everything else which I esteem or value on earth. Claim me as Thy right, keep me as Thy charge, fight for me in all assaults, and revive me when I am cast down!

September 3d.—During the last few days I have had but little of the sensible comforts and overflowings of joy which I have before experienced. But peace I still enjoy; peace which the world cannot take away. I now perceive that we are all but learners in the school of Christ.

October 4th.—A nervous gloom and agitation seemed to seize me. Such a day surely I have never seen. O my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I prayed for death, life being a burden. No power to pray, no faith, no love.

5th.—My cry was, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" I had a dreadful conflict with the enemy of my soul. Ah! Lord, I cannot drink this cup. O, remove it, if it be Thy blessed will! Yet not my will, but Thine, be done. I was ready to curse the day of my birth. Pity me, O Lord! for I would love Thee with all my heart and soul. The Sabbath comes, but no rest, no peace; no comfort even at church. In the evening, I met the class at twice; but on kneeling to pray, was not able to raise my voice.

"From shore to shore why should I run,
When none his tiresome self can shun?"

17th.—Yesterday I came to London for succour and comfort. I had prayed the Lord to open my way, which He was pleased to do. How good art Thou, O my God! What thanks are due to Thee, the almighty Parent of good! At the Foundery I heard Mr. Jones, at five o'clock in the morning, on 1 Cor. iii. 11-14. He comforted me much, by showing that a believer could not perish; but that he who rests in justification, and does not seek for sanctifying grace, must be saved by fire.

18th.—I heard Mr. William Darney, at five, expound the sixty-third Psalm. The dry and thirsty state of the wilderness suited my experience. I could say, "O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee."

[This preacher was a native of Scotland, and educated in high Calvinistic opinions. On joining Mr. Wesley, he professed a belief in the Methodist doctrines; yet the doctrine of sanctification, as taught by Mr. Wesley, he did not believe; and his favourite doctrine of the final and unconditional perseverance of the saints, he never renounced. As a master encourages his workmen, and as a general animates his army, so we should ever encourage the saints to persevere; yet this should not be done without all the strong and salutary cautions of the sacred writings.

[With regard to indwelling sin, St. Clement, a companion of St. Paul, and Macarius, and all the primitive fathers, teach as the Methodists. But Augustine, though he had taught the same, yet, when aged and sick, fell into nervous infirmities, and became timid and fearful lest he should perish. He

read the seven penitential Psalms daily, with tears, and wrote his Retractions; among which he contended that the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans was not, as he had formerly said, "delivered in a figure to bring over the Jews from legal bondage to the liberty of Christ, but was St. Paul's own experience."—Notwithstanding these opinions, Mr. Darney was a most laborious missionary man for more than twenty years, chiefly in the manufacturing districts, and in the north of England. It is true, he durst not preach these doctrines very openly; but he would do it with a friend, and in remote corners of the land. The Calvinists liked to hear him, and gave him the appellation of *Scotch Will*.

[Once, indeed, he was detected in a very remarkable manner, as was related to me by an aged Baptist minister in the north. He preached in a yard, and stood on a hogshead. In the discourse, he reverted to his favourite subject, perseverance: he declared that the saints could never fall; no, so sure as he stood there, they could never fall. The preacher here augmenting the powers of emphasis by a too heavy stamp of the foot, in went the head of the hogshead, along with the preacher; and it was with difficulty, he being corpulent, that his friends could extricate him. This may illustrate what Mr. Valton adds.]

October 21st.—This evening Mr. Darney drank tea with me at my lodgings, and the conversation proved very hurtful to me. I told him, that for some time I had been wrestling with God for a clean heart, and for an instantaneous deliverance from inward impurity. To my great surprise and discouragement, he said, there was no such thing attainable on earth; that the notion was quite

unscriptural; that while we are on earth we must be growing in grace, and always receiving fresh supplies of strength; and, consequently, that the notion of an instantaneous deliverance was quite unfounded! This discourse threw me back into great discouragement. I retired, and wrote as under.

“Then, Lord, if this be true, I shall one day fall by the hand of Satan, who is ever following men for destruction. Great God! and can it be Thy will that this cursed concupiscence should continue as long as there is life in man? Shall I always be in danger from this? Where, then, is Thy great salvation? Ah! come, death, thou great sanctifier, thou joint Saviour with Christ, Thou that preparest us for glory, and deliver me from sin! Christ has done His part, in the purchase of redemption, and in preparing me for thy finishing hand. Come, O death, bring forth thy topstone with shouting, ‘Grace, grace unto it!’ Finish the work, and prepare me for the Lord.”

After this discourse, I almost despaired of holding out to the end. I would have given a thousand pounds, had I so much money at command, not to have heard it. The consequences might have been worse, only a friend in the city had let me read a letter from Mr. Brandon, then in the Colchester Circuit, giving an account how he had attained the grace of sanctification. I thought I should, situate as I was, one day be conquered. On naming this to Mr. Darney, he advised me to marry. What a variety of helps there must be, in addition to what Thou, O Lord, hast done! Nay, death must lend the finishing hand. I almost repent coming up from Purfleet.

24th.—This evening my continual prayer was answered. Mr. Wesley arrived, in perfect health, just in time to step into the pulpit, and preach on Psalm lxxxi. 10: "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." What an extensive promise,—Ask, and have! This discourse, opportunely removed my doubts about an instantaneous salvation; yet, otherwise, I was blessed under Mr. Darney's sermons. I see, when we enter the field against the world, the flesh, and the devil, we must hang out the bloody flag,—to conquer or die;—no quarter to the old man; and victory is sure to the persevering soul.

December 25th.—This morning I rose early, and met the society at four o'clock. At night, we had buns, after the manner of the London lovefeasts; and God blessed us together. I received a very comfortable letter from Mr. Wesley, in answer to mine of the 17th. But, O! my soul for the last six weeks has been greatly afflicted with nervous gloom, and sorely harassed with temptations, often more than I thought nature could have borne. This must be my infirmity, since I have peace with God.

26th.—This morning, I could almost believe that God had cleansed my heart from sin; not from any more comfortable communion I had with God; but I thought it must be near, and that I ought to enjoy it, as it were, by anticipation,—a sure way to bring it by believing. Lord, do Thou confirm it by the testimony of Thy Spirit! Amen.

January 1st, 1766.—By the mercy and goodness of God I am brought safely to the beginning of the new year. May the Lord grant that I may improve the mercies of my added life, and spend every hour to His glory! In the evening, I went to the renewal

of the covenant at Spitalfields chapel. It was a solemn and devout season, and God was eminently present. I now find an abiding sense of His love to my soul, and confidence to believe that my sins are blotted out; yet the enemy sometimes causes me to doubt a little, though not now with either pain or fear. The cause is, feeling some emotions of pride, and a desire of the esteem of men: I start at the thought, and pray to be delivered from them.

16th.—I was much blessed this morning at prayer, and felt encouraged to believe that the Lord had cleansed my heart from sin: yet, sometimes in the day, I felt fretfulness and wandering thoughts. Mrs. Smitton, a lady on a visit here, related her experience in the class. I truly rejoiced in spirit, in hopes of finding the same grace. Under such testimonies I catch a flame from the celestial altar, which glows with hallowing influence. What, shall one member be blessed, and all the others not rejoice?

17th.—While seeking a clean heart, and a right spirit, I have been much perplexed and misguided by some friends in London, of warm heart, but less enlightened minds. They endeavour to force faith into me by saying, "Believe that the work is done, and it is done." This has, sometimes, driven me almost to distraction, so that I have been ready to charge God foolishly for not honouring my acts of faith. If I am to ask the blessing, and expect it now, solely for the merits of Christ, this is the scriptural way: but if I am to expect it for the sake of my poor weak faith, what is this but to seek it by works? What is it, in fact, but to believe a lie, that the work is done when it is not done? Mr.

Windsor, to whom I opened my mind on this point, greatly relieved me. Since then, I have had much peace, and much comfort, from the words of Habakkuk, "If it tarry, wait for it." I am endeavouring to do so, and believe that I shall soon obtain it. How valuable are spiritual guides and leaders who are divinely taught!

23d.—O good Lord, what a day! and the day set apart to praise God for my conversion! I read books likely to give me light, but could find nothing relevant. I am always, either in thought, word, or work, doing amiss. I long to please God in all I do; and yet such is my behaviour, and such is my nature, that I am grieving and displeasing Him continually. My life is a sore burden; I fear I shall be ruined. I cannot bear it; nor can I hold out much longer. But what can I do? for hell I cannot bear! I must bear one or the other. I am damned if the Lord help me not. O that He would pity me! Avaunt, Satan! "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." I believe He will deliver me, and that these sore conflicts are for my good. My prayers have been mixed with strange cries and tears. Surely this is a time of trouble, and such as I never had since I became a seeker of salvation.

Sunday, 26th.—This morning I was much comforted in prayer, and felt an overflowing of peace and love. In the evening, at our meeting, I expounded on the woman who had lost her piece of money; and a woman cried aloud for mercy while I was in prayer, and in a short time was enabled to praise the Lord. Her soul was so filled with a sense of God's pardoning love, as not to be able to contain her joys. This mightily encouraged me, and, indeed, all the class. And we were the more encouraged

because she afterwards retained her peace and joy. These are marks of the power and presence of God which cause the angels to rejoice.

February 8th.—Through the mercy of God, I still enjoy peace, and have continued to do so for many days. Yesterday we spent in fasting and prayer, in our little class, for sister Edwards, whose life was thought to be in danger.

11th.—William Thompson, a labourer, has joined our little class; and next evening brought his wife, and his brother and wife also, to our meeting. The latter had said she should not meet again. Thank God, our little flock is now increased to nine.

23d.—At the class this evening I had great faith for those that had not found peace. While at prayer the room was filled with tears and cries. My soul pleaded, saying, "Lord, whom wilt Thou bless?" "Ah!" cried one, "it will not be me, I am so unworthy." "O, no," cried another, "I am more unworthy." We continued in prayer till every one was made happy, except the soldier who had lately joined the class. He complained of the hardness of his heart, and seemed the more distressed to see others made happy while he was not so. I was much tempted, after I had returned home, to think that I should have faith for others, and almost none for myself. For the last fortnight I have sunk back into my nervous gloom of agitation and inquietude, fearing I shall be lost at last. God only knows the conflicts and temptations through which I have passed. Yet, in the midst of my greatest agony, I thought I heard a soft whisper through my heart, and a whisper thrice repeated, "I have blessed thee; yea, and thou shalt be blessed."

April 14th.—In the morning, while at breakfast, I felt my soul melted into tears of joy. In the evening of this day, it was suggested to me, that I had not lost my Saviour, but that the terrible aspects of Satan and of hell, and the thought that I was quite fallen away, were only a taste of that bitter cup which some souls are called to drink, and which good Mr. Thomas Walsh found on his death-bed. These considerations greatly encouraged me.

18th.—This evening brother Weaver called me out to pray with two matrosses, (privates in the artillery,) who were committed for the murder of a man the preceding evening. The guard-room was full of soldiers. I trembled a little at first, but soon my nervous fears vanished away. I read part of Ezekiel xviii., "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness," &c.; sung and prayed, then talked to them: but, alas! they made efforts to deny the crime. The soldiers seemed deeply impressed, and behaved with the greatest seriousness: so I closed by singing and praying a second time. Next morning, I was with them again, and continued most of the time till they were taken away to the gaol at Chelmsford. We collected them a little money, and I forwarded hymns and prayers for them soon after. I wrote to them during their confinement; but the case proving to be one of manslaughter, their repentance vanished away.

28th.—I had written to Mr. Pennington to come and spend a Sabbath with us at Purfleet; and felt no misgiving after I had written the letter. However, yesterday, Mr. Mark Davis, a preacher in the London Circuit, came and preached, at seven o'clock, on the road-side, to a pretty large congregation; and at six the congregation was very large. Next morn-

ing, at five, he preached in brother Weaver's house. Here a storm rose on me and brother Weaver. He must, with a wife and four children, be turned out of bread, and I dismissed; the store-keeper and the commanding officer being incensed against me for bringing a stranger to preach close to the magazine. Mrs. Edwards interfered, and a soft answer turned away wrath. By this visit five persons were added to the society; which was a happy circumstance, as part of the class were presently removed to Woolwich. During this conflict and storm I was sick at home of a fever and ague; and my medical attendant was little aware that it was the agitated state of my mind which occasioned the fever.

During this fever I was seized, as I thought, for death: my breathing ceased. My cry was, "O Lord, prepare me for dying!" In this state I felt no condemnation for past sins, and had peace in my soul; but I expected that the Lord would have manifested Himself to me in that glorious manner which He is often pleased to do to His dying saints. Such, indeed, were my peace and joy after this crisis, that I really thought the Lord had cleansed my heart from sin: my warm and hasty tempers seemed all subdued. If it be so, may the Lord bear His witness to the work.

26th.—Walking to-day with brother Windsor, I told him my experience: he thought that God had indeed given me a clean heart; and I was not aware of feeling any wrong temper till, this afternoon, a degree of resentment rose in my heart. This good and happy frame has been connected with much enlargement in prayer, and an overflowing of tears, and praise, and joy.

June 3d.—O, what deadness have I experienced

for the last two days ! Terribly afraid of falling from grace, and borne away with wandering thoughts ! Full of peevishness, anger, envy, and jealousy ! Weary of life, and sorry for my birth ! I really thought it was impossible for me ever to gain heaven. I know this is my infirmity, ever excited anew by crosses and trials. My cry was,

“ Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past !
Safe into the haven guide ;
O receive my soul at last ! ”

July 11th.—For the last six weeks I have had great and sore conflicts with the enemy of my soul. My cry now was, “ My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? ” Surely I cannot hold out beyond to-day. I prayed so often, that my knees were sore ; and ate nothing, except a little bread and cheese in the morning, till four o’clock. Some of my past sins were thrust in my face. Yet, thank God, I am kept from murmuring. Much of this is nervous infirmity ; for when engaged for God, and meeting with His people, this dejection is altogether removed.

20th.—This Sabbath morning, while at prayer, great encouragement was afforded me, accompanied with a strong persuasion “ that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should ever be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.” I could talk with my Maker, and He graciously refreshed my soul. He now shows me that my depression and my wanderings are occasioned very much by want of faith in the promises. O gracious Saviour, enable me to rely solely on Thy wisdom and strength ; and strip me of all

dependence on an arm of flesh ! Glory be to Thee, my ever-faithful Lord !

August 12th.—I have received great light by reading "The Gospel Glass," in "The Christian Library : " a very searching book. I discovered many spots, but was persuaded the Lord would wipe them all away ; and I saw so many marks of a sound conversion as to afford me great comfort, and, especially, as I was assured, that what I had discovered amiss should all be done away. O, how manifold are the mercies of God to me ! To recount them would be as impossible as to number the sands on the sea-shore. God is love : and they that have most love are most in the Divine favour ; for God loves His own image.

O Lord, I do beseech Thee, enable me to glorify Thee in my body and my spirit, which are Thine ; make me willing to be spent for Thee in Thy service, upright and honest in Thy sight ! Let Thy glory only be my aim, Thy cross my boast and joy, and Thy crown my final portion ! I long to serve Thee for Thy own sake, to be wholly Thine, and ever abased, as a poor nothing, at Thy feet.

24th.—Being in London, I heard Mr. Wesley with great comfort ; and was delighted to find that Mr. Whitefield and he, though divided in connexions, were nevertheless of one heart and one soul.

29th.—This being my intercession-day, which I spent much in prayer, I kneeled down at twelve ; and no sooner was I engaged with God, than I felt a strange and silent alteration, and for nearly five minutes began to cry, "Glory, glory, glory be to God !" Then, after a moment of calm, I said, "Thou hast delivered me from all my sin. Thou

hast not failed of all that Thou hast promised in Thy word. Glory be to Thee, Thou hast given me the desire of my heart over all my enemies, whom, I trust, I shall see no more for ever." "O Lord," my cry was, "I am sure Thou hast destroyed my sin, and made me holy; I am sure Thou hast; I am sure Thou hast performed the work. O, give me the seal, and let me, if it please Thee, depart hence, and be for ever with the Lord!"

It was, however, suggested by the enemy, "You see now the fruit of much prayer and of walking closely with God." Grace in my heart replied to the tempter with shouting, "Grace, grace, upon it!" My words were, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." The Lord, I believe, has removed the stone from my heart, and will perfect His work with acclamations of grace and glory. Being now very happy, I prayed that the Lord would not suffer me to be high-minded or vain-glorious, but ever keep me lowly at His feet, and never suffer me to lose the blessing. I fell down on my face, and praised the Lord; for my efforts to pray failed. I was lost in wonder, love, and praise. I now felt

"The sacred awe which dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love."

Yea, I felt it, and rejoiced in the Lord.

I next, according to custom, sat down to read the Psalms and Lessons for the day; and then falling down on my knees, a much greater portion of love flowed into my heart. O, how I then began to praise the Lord for Mr. Wesley, for raising him up to preach the whole Gospel! I prayed earnestly, not only for him, but also for Mr. Whitefield, that

the Lord would give him to see the truth of what Mr. Wesley preached. I felt a great desire to write to him an account of what God had done for my soul, but was deterred by the fear of vain-glory.

30th.—Glory be to God, I have still reason to believe, and hold fast my confidence, that the Lord has delivered me from all my inward foes ; and that sin shall no more have place in me. I am lost in amazement at His mercy, when I consider how often He has delivered me from the most imminent dangers. O, verily, Thou art God, loving and gracious : I see Thy hand in all my ways. O the many snares which have been laid for me, and yet the Lord has preserved me !

September 1st.—Various doubts have crossed my mind to-day, whether the work which the Lord has wrought in me be real ; but I have endeavoured all in my power to resist them. And, blessed be the Lord, I do not know that I have felt anything in my heart contrary to the Divine change. O, I never could have imagined that there were such condescension, love, and parental tenderness in the great Jehovah towards worms of dust and corruption !

While writing, as above, O how the fire of love did kindle in my soul ! I long to be prostrate at the Saviour's feet : my soul is ravished with His love. What I have read in Mr. Wesley's " Plain Account of Christian Perfection " tended to comfort me, where he observes that " most of those who found the blessing in London, a few years ago, were delivered from sin before they were filled with love." This was much the same with me.

3d.—I have been most sorely beset to-day, by the enemy of souls darting old temptations across my mind. But, in the presence of God, I believe that

they come not from my own heart; and I got rid of them as fast as they came; yet they were very troublesome, and sorely afflicted me. I find many fears also, lest I should lose the blessing; but, by the help of God, I will believe as long as I can. I find myself so weak and tender, that a very little thing will discourage me. O Saviour, do Thou ever save me, and may Thy will be done! The enemy often suggests, "What if such and such things were to happen? you would soon see an end of all your perfection." The Lord rebuke thee, Satan.

9th.—This has been a day of sore and dreadful temptations. While in Mr. Healey's house, after dinner, I sunk down on the floor. I requested them to leave me, that I might wrestle with the Lord. My conflicts were hard with flesh and blood. Yet the temptations coming from without, and being resisted, I felt no condemnation. I fled from them to visit the sick soldiers in the hospital.

11th.—Lord, I am in great distress: my sorrow is great, and my temptations are strong. In some moments, when the billows go over my head, I am ready to say, "O that I had never been born! or, being born, that I had speedily made my exit!" O, Jesus, hear my complaint, and bear with me! O, forgive my past and my present unfruitfulness, and lay it not to my charge! Deliver me, I pray, from the fear of man! I desire, were it possible, to spend my soul for Thee, and yet am afraid to spend the body! I desire to help the thousands that are about me; I see I want more love to constrain me to do good. O, make it my meat and drink to do Thy blessed will!

19th.—This morning I heard, at Spitalfields, a most close and searching sermon: it came home like

the address of Nathan to David, "Thou art the man." In the evening I attended the select band; and, no preacher being present, I was requested to open the meeting. The enemy afterwards tried to excite pride in me, because I had met the band. Yet I still believe that I have the blessing, though the evidence be not so discernible as at the first.

23d.—To-day I visited my sister, just returned from France, where she had resided for eighteen years, quite a gay lady, dressed *à la mode de Paris*. Having presently after to visit in a family where they were all Roman Catholics, I feared to suffer loss in my soul, and besought the Lord; and was heard in that I feared. I spoke pointedly against theatres, novels, and the prevailing follies of the age. And when mauled for Methodism, and leaving the true religion,—as the Pope's supremacy, the infallibility of the Church, *cum multis aliis*,—I was, by the grace of God, enabled to make such replies as they could not answer. But I saw their resolution was, "Thou shalt not persuade me, though thou dost persuade me." I stood firm against my dear sister's prayers and entreaties to return to the Romish religion. By-and-by she and others got angry with me, dropping delicate hints that I was a hypocrite, and that religion had made me mad. One young girl, however, seemed affected, and resolved to search the Scriptures, and with prayer, as I had advised her. Lord, I bless Thee for preserving me in this day's fight! I am, therefore, the more encouraged to believe that the Lord has cleansed my heart.

29th.—Yesterday, being Sunday, I attended at Spitalfields; and, after service, having retired for prayer, the Lord did, in a most wonderful manner, bless me. He poured His love so plenteously into

my soul, that I hardly knew how to contain myself. I thought I must have cried, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin!" I never was so overpowered before, and my strength was well-nigh spent in praising God. O, how did my soul exult, and gasp to breathe the purer air of heaven! The saws and racks, the Pope and purgatory, of which we had been talking a few days before, were now as nothing to me; all were trifles light as air. Christ is mine, and I am His.

October 5th.—The Lord abundantly poured His love into my heart this morning. I went to church very happy, and experienced much of the Almighty's presence. I do not know that I ever had a clearer testimony of the Spirit that my sins were forgiven, than I now have of being cleansed from sin. When I calmly put the question to myself, "Yea, has the Lord indeed destroyed my sin?" I felt the Spirit strongly answer by an inundation of love.

8th.—The Lord still blesses me with an increase of love. I scarcely ever go on my knees but I find fresh manifestations of His goodness. I feel no doubt, no unbelief, nothing but love, unless it be now and then a fear lest my evil tempers should return. I feel no desires after the flesh, my sole wish being to live more and more to the glory of God. Yet I am tried with our little society. Since some of our brethren were removed, they have not met well; and they find fault with me for reproving them too harshly when I hear that they do amiss.

I have lately paid three visits to Tilbury-Fort, where I found two or three that have formerly been awakened under the word, but are now in a dark state: I have exhorted and prayed with them, in hopes of seeing the work revive. Four soldiers have

now joined our class at Purfleet, who I hope will enliven our meetings.

November 16th.—Being in London to enjoy the means of grace, I read Mr. Walsh's Life a second time ; and was much comforted by finding, that for many days he experienced sore temptations, and at the time deep consolations. I find it has been exactly with me as it was with him. After reading the account of his death, I went to prayer, and had a remarkable sense of the presence of God. O, how sweetly did He deluge my soul with His love ! But, having caught a cold, I was violently seized with pain, and quite unable to walk : so I called a coach, and reached the barge. The next day I was worse, and looked for death every hour. But O, with what transport was I filled ! my joy was unspeakable and full of glory. Like Stephen, I saw, as it were, the arms of Jesus open to receive me. I exclaimed, "Truly His blood cleanses from all unrighteousness !"

17th.—This day was as yesterday. The thought of the Saviour, and of being with Him, did so move and elevate my soul, that I thought the vessel must break, and that the love of God would kill me. My tongue was fully employed all the day in declaring the loving-kindness of the Lord.

27th.—My health is so far restored that I went to the class. Two of those who left us are now dead. I hope we are clear of their blood. I am rather low in my spirits. The enemy harasses me about neglecting the sick, and the souls at Tilbury. How can I under these temptations "rejoice evermore ?"

December 11th.—I have had a relapse of my fever, and much depression in my mind. But though there was no praise on my tongue, yet there was

peace in my heart. I fell back in my chair at brother Healey's; and, with uplifted eyes and extended arms, could bless the hand that chastened me. In all this affliction and dejection I have been kept from murmuring. I have great need to add to my faith courage: then, under all my afflictions, I should be far more comfortable.

31st.—O Lord, what great and sore trials hast Thou brought me through in the year past! Yea, Thou hast brought me through all, and didst truly deliver me from the stony heart. O God, there is no end of Thy goodness and mercy; and if I never live to write another journal, let this last page speak my heart,—**GOD IS LOVE**. I now know the meaning of that text, “Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.” He purgeth us that we may bring forth more fruit. Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High, Three in One, and One in Three! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

January 1st, 1767.—“Blessed be the Lord my God, who hath brought me safe to the beginning of a new year. Glory be to God that I am not yet cut down! May I now “reward the tiller's toil,” and become fruitful, and faithful to the grace of God!

In the presence of God, I have no doubt that the Lord did deliver me from all sin; but whether it be so now or not, I cannot so clearly tell. If I were assured it were not so, I should be truly miserable. I cannot say, when crosses come, and afflictions are to be borne, that I find either murmuring or impatience. I am content to suffer, so that I may be found blameless at the coming of the Lord. I hate all praise, feeling that I am vile, ignorant, and helpless; yea, “a dead dog” in the sight of

heaven. O my God, make me an honest man, a true and upright Christian, such as Thou wilt own in the day of Thy coming!

Shine on Thy work, that I may know the things that are given me of God. Make me a pillar in Thy house, to go out no more for ever; and seal me to the day of redemption.

8th.—A scrutiny took place in my breast this morning, whether I had lost the evidence of my sanctification. Did I really feel, and in some degree give way to, anger? I believe I did. O, how unhappy I am! Some time ago a text was powerfully applied to my mind: "Gad,—a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at last." The first part of this text is fulfilled in me: I am overcome. O that the second may also at last be accomplished in me! I feel unaccountable reluctance to visit the sick in the hospital; and the classes are all discouraged on my account.

[For about two months Mr. Valton had a return of his nervous fever, accompanied with ague, as he himself states. A gloom of discouragement overspread his mind, but not without intervals of sunshine; and he was able most of the time to attend to the duties of the office. In three or four places his journal is painted in the strongest language of anguish; and which none can fully sympathise with but those who have drunk of the same bitter cup. Hear what he says in his own abridgment which was published in the Arminian Magazine. It may be useful to others; for God who delivered him can deliver them.]

19th.—This day my miseries became insupportable. I was only fit for Bethlehem Hospital. No demoniac could be worse. Cries, tears, groans, and

moanings issued from my heart. I uttered words which I ought not, and yet could not help it. Like Job, I cursed the day of my birth, and concluded the day in an agony of prayer. My language was, "O, I am damned, I am damned! I am fully overcome. Poor unfortunate young man! My poor soul, thou must perish at last. Farewell all hope. O my God, for Christ's sake take away my life! Lord Jesus, call me home, and deliver me from the evil to come, else I shall finally perish!"

20th.—This morning I rose at five, and was till eight in utter despair. Tears, and groans, and stretching out my hands, were part of my morning sacrifice. Yet I was kept from murmuring; but earnestly besought the Lord to take away my life. In the course of the day I was comforted by a letter from a lady in London. She encouraged me to hold fast the promise I had received, "Gad—shall overcome at last." It is not one temptation, but a troop which have vanquished me. For the time I had power given me to pray, and to believe that I should at last overcome. O God, I bless Thee for this consolation; and I beseech Thee to forgive what in moments of anguish I have said amiss.

24th.—This morning, after praying with much deadness, I soon became quite another man: all my trials and temptations were suspended. The transition so delighted me, that I scarcely knew how to utter the sentiments of my heart. I was so happy, that I could scarcely pray; not so much from sensible comforts, as from an apprehension of the removal of my temptations and trials. I thought the Lord had answered the prayers of some one who had been engaged with Him on my account.

February 4th.—Being in London for the last six

days, and among Christian friends, my temptations have vanished away. Mr. Wesley comforted and encouraged me very much. On Monday I dined with Mr. and Mrs. Harle, at Mr. Windsor's. These have both been touched by the Gospel within the last few weeks. I found, to my astonishment, that Mr. Harle lives at Rainham, but five miles from me. He took me home in his chaise to sleep, and next morning went with me to visit some sick people. Like the young ruler, mentioned Mark x., he has great possessions, and much zeal.

6th.—Returning to Purfleet, my temptations seem to return. Yesterday I was in Bunyan's iron cage, terribly harassed by the enemy. This afternoon Mr. Harle came to see me: he is full of peace and joy, and imagines he shall see war no more. He stayed to attend our meeting, and was much blessed; but my fleece remains dry. What augments my present trials is, the remembrance of what I enjoyed after the 29th of last August, when for many weeks I walked in the light of the Lord, and talked with my Maker, as it were, face to face.

March 12th.—I went to Mr. Harle's, to hear Mr. Glascock, whom he had invited to preach in his house. Soon after the text was read, Mr. Dearsby came in, the father of Mrs. Harle, dressed like a country squire, with a large horsewhip in his hand. He was a tall and powerful man. He, and two more, began the fray by calling wicked names. He then endeavoured to strike the preacher; but he evaded the blow by slipping up stairs. I sat still, expecting no further harm. He then came up to me, and asked, "Who do you belong to?" I replied, "To the king." "No; you are that dog," &c., &c.; "and I will write and get two or three of you turned out

of your places." On saying that, he drove me out of the room. I slipped into the kitchen; and, while engaged in praying for him and others, he followed me, violently swearing that he would broil me on the fire; and, seizing me by the breast and thigh, he laid me on the bars. The two, thinking, perhaps, that he was going too far, rescued me, and drove me out of doors into the hands of a mob of thirty or forty men. The mob, merciless as their employer, pulled me about various ways, crying out, "This is the clerk: pull him to pieces!" They tore my shirt from the top to the bottom. Some held me by my long hair; others by my cravat, which they called my bands; and one nearly succeeded in getting my watch. At length, through the mercy of God, the man who would have broiled me rescued me from their fury. Mr. Harle's brother conducted me through the yard; and at a small distance I met the vicar, the Rev. Mr. Walters, and his lady, come to see the after-game, who saluted me with "Villain!" &c., &c. Three of the mob followed me with execrations, intending to put me in the pool at the end of the town. Suffice it to say, I reached home to thank the Lord for having escaped fire, and water, and blood.

14th.—For the last two days, since the storm at Rainham, I have enjoyed much of the presence of God, and find my faith in Christ much increased. In the course of the day, having besought the Lord for guidance, I wrote to Mr. Walters, in vindication of my conduct in visiting the sick; for he had bitterly reproached me for this; adding, that I should say, they would be damned. Four more of our class, and the more pious too, are ordered on foreign service. May the Lord be with them where their lot shall be cast!

16th.—For the last month I have been sorely depressed with nervous dejection and temptations; but this morning, though weak, I was enabled to meet my friends, and my mouth was opened to pray and to speak with great power in the class. I found, by waiting upon the Lord, that my strength was much renewed. On examining my heart, I have found in myself three kinds of prayer: *first*, an impetuous, earnest, and violent desire that others might be blessed; that is chiefly man's prayer: *secondly*, an humble, earnest, pleading prayer, proceeding from a broken heart, bleeding with compassion; there is much of the Spirit of God in this,—it is generally much blessed to others: *thirdly*, the prayer of God, or praying in the Holy Ghost. This consists in short phrases and sentences, chiefly in Scripture language; the soul feasts on the answer while one petition slowly succeeds another. This is the prayer which God emphatically inspires. It is often not relished by lukewarm professors; but on the purified it leaves behind the mantle of Elijah. Lord, evermore teach me thus to pray! Since this depression has rested on my spirits, I have had much more life and spirits when I have prayed in the meetings, than in my closet.

22d.—Being in London, I dined with a Roman Catholic party, consisting of my father, sister, and a young lady of well-cultivated mind. This young friend and myself had rather a protracted disputation about Catholicism. My father was very attentive; but my sister, like Gallio, "cared for none of these things." I perceived that my father approved of my arguments: the lady could not answer me with any degree of plausibility. After my father and I were left alone, he became very serious and

we parted with kind affection. I yielded to him in sitting for my portrait, to be sent to my brother, in South Carolina ; but on this condition, that I should appear in a plain dress, and my Bible in my hand, with this inscription on it, " IN CHRISTO SPES MEA."

July 7th.—To-day I went to Sevenoaks for the re-establishment of my health ; and found benefit soon after I got out of London. I spent my evenings mostly with a few brethren at the preaching-room, and once had much liberty in meeting a large class. The communion of the saints is known to none but pious souls.

August 14th.—Being returned to Purfleet, I find my health better, and my soul refreshed. I had many good times in London, and led a sort of angelic life, frequently visiting the sick in St. Thomas's Hospital, and the Marshalsea Prison. I begin now to find more comfortable assurances of my salvation, but have not been without temptations. My discouragements and want of power to pray have surely been owing chiefly to an infirmity which affects the nerves.

24th.—At our public meeting this evening we had two strangers, who are hearers of Mr. Whitefield. After singing, I felt enlargement in prayer ; and, after a little circumlocution about setting up for a preacher, I ventured for the first time to take a text : Matt. v. 25, " Agree with thine adversary quickly," &c. The Lord opened my mouth beyond all that I could have conceived, and enabled me to speak as the Spirit gave me utterance. I sung and prayed three times, and yet was afterwards better in health than I have been for some time.

29th.—This is the anniversary of the day on which the Lord put my inward enemies under my feet, and

entirely destroyed them ; and though I have been sorely afflicted with temptations and nervous depressions, yet, glory be to God, He has preserved me amidst all the ills which have assailed my soul. I find on those days on which I am the most employed for God, in the hospitals and among friends, that I have the most humbling views of myself. I loathe myself, and regard my life as a mere blank. God be merciful to me a sinner ! Some days I am so much engaged that I have scarcely time to eat.

November 19th.—The Lord of late seems to have favoured me as Job, by giving me twice as much in the end as in the beginning. He has enlightened my mind, made my memory retentive, and given me amazing power of utterance, in which I was before very defective. In expounding the parable of the Dry Bones this evening, I was enabled to speak convincingly. In these bones we have a striking emblem of the natural man, dead in sin. In the noise and shaking we have a figure of the awakened sinner, going about for help, and inquiring what he must do to be saved. By the flesh and sinews we see the state of one using the means of grace, and gaining the form of godliness ; and by the breath coming into them, we see the Spirit of Life, as in regenerate souls.

December 23d.—I begin now to comprehend, in some degree, the height and depth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. When I am not watchful for two or three days, the Lord rebukes and chastises me, but yet does not change His gracious countenance towards me. I have power imparted simply to commit my soul into His hands, that God may give or withhold temporal or spiritual good, as seems right to my Heavenly Father. I seem

to live in sweet communion with angels and saints, and on the borders of paradise. Surely I taste the powers of the world to come, and long to depart, and be with Christ.

December 25th.—This being the festival of the nativity, thirteen of us met at five in the morning, and I explained 1 Tim. i. 15: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." In the evening we joined ourselves to the Lord and to His people, in the more regular form of a class.

26th.—This was to me a most remarkable morning. My soul was favoured with sweet assurances of honour, glory, immortality, and eternal life. In general, I now feel a kind of heaven; and in prayer I have such displays of the love of God as astonish and abase me. I hide myself as in the dust, and say, "Lord, I am nothing, and Christ is all." Often I have watered my books, while writing, with tears of joy. O, blessed be the Lord for redeeming grace, and all that He has laid up for us in Christ Jesus the Lord!

January 1st, 1768.—O my God, how manifold have been Thy mercies to me, the chief of sinners! Thou hast performed Thy mercy promised, by delivering me out of the hands of all my enemies, that I might serve Thee without fear all the future days of my life. Thou hast given me "to overcome at last," and a consoling hope that I shall no more drink of the bitter cup of trembling. Thou art my God, my rock, and my hope. Glory be ascribed to Thee for ever! Amen.

February 21st.—This was a morning of sore temptation till about nine o'clock. I thought the Lord was about to present to me again the bitter cup. I most earnestly besought Him to deliver me,

to shield me from future evils ; and in the midst of my distress that promise was applied, " My grace is sufficient for thee." My soul felt its truth and power, and praised the Lord.

March 10th.—I was favoured this evening with much enlargement in prayer ; and the Lord blessed us much in our little meeting. I have of late remarked, that whenever I have prayed for anything in particular, I have soon after heard of something which has indicated a gracious answer. I have been praying much for an enlargement of the work of God ; and was gratified to-day by hearing that Mr. Wesley has been preaching in Chatham barracks, and that multitudes, both of officers and soldiers, had received the word with joy.

18th.—To-day I went and spoke to the colonel in behalf of three of our labourers who had lately joined the class, and now had received notice that they should be dismissed at the end of the month. The crime laid to their charge was—praying at meal-times. The colonel promised that he would dismiss the complaint. In the evening I had a gracious time, while enforcing a full and a present salvation, from those words, " This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

April 7th.—The last few days I have been very busy in the magazine ; and, blessed be the Lord, there is not a man that swears in my presence. And I find my soul fully as happy there as I usually do in my hours for reading and prayer. Like the labourers, I have now no time for reading and prayer, except at meal-times. An active life is better than a sedentary life for the nervous infirmities which still hang about me.

15th.—Brother Ottawill was arrested this morning

for a debt he had contracted before his joining our class, and taken to the inn at Aveley, prior to his going to Chelmsford gaol. I went to console him, but had no thought of compromising the matter, having no money. His wife, the creditor, a young lady, and the two bailiffs, were present. We sung a verse and prayed, and the lady's heart was so touched, that she offered to grant him a discharge on paying down six guineas. I had but three, and she took his note for three more. On returning, an officer accosted me,—“Valton, I have good news to tell you. The Board have granted you £3. 12s. for the pains you took in settling Mr. Gare's powder account.” This was an unexpected boon, at a time when I was destitute of money.

17th.—This Sabbath morning Mr. Harle fetched me in his chaise to Rainham; where, after dinner, I expounded the parable of the Prodigal Son. So the enemy has roared in vain: he cannot stop the work of God. It was far better that I took my ill-usage to a heavenly rather than an earthly court.

May 20th.—Last night and this morning, being in agony of mind, I again looked over Mr. Wesley's “Treatise on Christian Perfection;” and was humbled to find that I had lost some marks of that happy state of mind. I saw that I was wanting in love, meekness, patience, and humility. I felt in myself a degree of dissimulation, and of inordinate love of the creature. I found that my spiritual union and communion with God was much diminished, and that dryness, wandering, and sameness had succeeded in my prayers. I saw that I had sustained a loss in my soul, and felt that I myself was alone to blame. Yet, while expounding the principal parables here, and in the villages, great power, and frequent

tears, attend the word. O Lord, fully restore me again to the glorious liberty of Thy children!

June 10th.—This day my dear mother in the Lord, Mrs. Edwards, departed this life. Happy woman! safe landed at last on a broken piece of the ship. She cared for my soul, as a mother for an only son. Would to God I had died for thee! The Lord has released her from great tribulation and afflictions. Sorrow and sighing are fled away, and everlasting joy is now begun. The will of the Lord be done. She has lived, in four years, to see two classes in Purfleet, one of women, and another of men. Lord, prepare my soul to follow!

August 3d.—Since I have read the Life of David Brainerd, I have sorely lamented my unworthiness, and late decay of life and love. I have never read of any man whose life had so near a resemblance to my own, with regard to feelings, to trials, and desires. In how many places has he transcribed my whole heart, which I, for want of abilities, have omitted! Yet, in my narrow sphere, engaged in a public office, controlled by superiors, my longings and desires, disappointments and encouragements, have latterly borne a resemblance to his. But, then, as a little star differs from one of the first magnitude, so was it between that man of God and me, a worm of dust. My aims, not my progress, resembled his achievements; or rather as the miniature is to the original. I say it, to show that the grace of God endeavoured to make me such, had I been faithful to its drawings. I honour his memory, and should have thought it a great favour to wash his feet.

19th.—Yesterday I expounded 1 Kings xix. 11–13: Elijah taking refuge in Horeb. I had no sooner begun, than the power of the Lord descended

like a cloud, and rested on the whole assembly. Such clear illustrations, close applications, and pathetic exhortations, I hardly ever before was enabled to make. While pressing the words, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" it seemed as if the chariot of the Lord, and the horsemen of Israel, were come to hasten us away.

[The writer, having waded through five dense volumes of our author's experience, comprising a period of five years, since his nervous fever at Greenwich, when he was a total stranger to experimental religion, would pause a moment to mark the contrast between the inward miseries he generally sustained, and the overflowing consolations with which he was often favoured. His conflicts which in fifty places made him wish to die, were bodily, and of which the enemy took great advantage. Perhaps, the "thorn in the flesh," of which St. Paul complains, was something of the same kind. Theophylact calls it *capitis malum*, "a complaint of the head." Be that as it might, Mr. Valton was preaching day and night in the villages, and, when travelling, to strangers; and in his Master's work he had no time to think of nervous afflictions.]

September 4th.—A friend told me this evening that Lord —— had sent a message to his tenant not to receive me into his house, nor suffer me to come upon his premises. Dr. B.'s sermon accounts for this. "Why should my lord come out against a flea, a dead dog?" My friend added, that had not my interest been good, I should have been turned out of my place. This treatment made me rather low at first; but I soon recollected that I had deserved a thousand times more than this; and, that though man was unrighteous, yet God was just

in suffering these trials to come upon me. But, seeing His Majesty's chaplain and a noble lord united against me, will not the people think that I am some hydra, sphinx, or other monster?

October 10th.—Having for some time had an invitation to Gloucestershire, I set out this morning for Painswick, where I was received with much affection and joy.

14th.—Last evening I was at brother Holder's class, and we had a blessed season; and, this morning, I spent two hours in conversation with him. He is a simple, sincere, and upright young man. The people flock round me with so much affection that I am afraid of myself, lest I should rest here, and not seek after more of the love of Christ.

21st.—Last evening I met the class, and this evening I spent with brother Newman. His soul was full of love, and he had no doubt of the blessed work of sanctifying grace in his soul. Another brother, affected by hearing my experience in the class, seems on the brink of deliverance. I told him that *now* was the accepted time, and that the Messenger of the covenant would come suddenly to His temple: and, indeed, it was so. He was excited to full expectation; and, in the middle of the night, the Lord came and took possession of his heart. We rejoiced and gave thanks together, as being partakers of like precious faith.

29th.—The last week I have been very much employed in visiting the poor in their houses, and have found much of the presence of the Lord. While meeting the classes also, I have eaten of the hidden manna. O, assuredly,

" 'Tis a heaven below
My Jesus to know! "

November 7th.—I arrived safe at Purfleet, after some hard contests for my Master, as well in the hoy, as on the coach; for I soon let the people know my character. I found my friends also in a comfortable state; and we met together, now eighteen in number. The good Shepherd has kept them during my absence.

13th.—This morning, being Sunday, I expounded Ezek. xxxvi. 25, &c. The Lord gave me such power in holding forth a full and a present salvation as I had never experienced before. My heart was full of matter, and my tongue full of argument. The word fell as the seeds on good ground, leaving conviction on the mind.

December 31st.—This evening, in the class, I read two letters I had received from Painswick; from which I took occasion to press them anew to look for sanctifying grace. Two members of the class were so blessed that they stood up to praise the Lord. I retired, and closed the year in prayer.

O Lord, I bless Thee that Thou hast brought me through another year. I thank Thee, O my blessed Redeemer, for all my great afflictions and sore temptations. There was, I know, a necessity for them. Thou hast supported me under them, and Thy grace has been sufficient for me. I bless Thee also for the success Thou hast given me in Thy work, and for the honour Thou hast put upon a worm of dust in employing me in doing Thy will. Five years ago, I crossed the Thames from Greenwich, a stranger to God, and a stranger to myself; and now I can sing,—

“O! the fathomless love,
That has deign’d to approve
And prosper the work of thine hand!”

Sunday, January 1st, 1769.—The whole of this day was a rejoicing day to my soul. I found the Lord present in every duty. The society met at six in the morning, for singing and prayer; and we plighted our troth to the Lord, and covenanted to serve Him more and more in the coming year.

20th.—This evening I talked with a family, and prayed in brother Weaver's house, who had just returned from the burial of their child. This is the second family that has left our meetings under a pretence that they must take care of their children; and the Lord, in this low and unhealthy place, has soon taken all their children away.

23d.—Last night I found my soul in a sweet frame, and fraught with matter, while explaining verses 10–16 of the eighth Psalm. But, just as I was about to begin, on seeing a decent stranger coming in, I was seized with fear and trembling, from which I suffered greatly. O my Lord, why dost Thou leave me a prey to those fears? Is there not a cause? Is it not to prevent pride, and check my forwardness? O Lord, if Thou hast sent me, qualify me for Thy work; but if I have run before I was sent, prevent my continuance in Thy work!

February 25th.—We have been dull in our class-meetings of late, yet the work is going on. A week ago sister Shepherd found peace with God; and yesterday sister Ottawill came to say, that the Lord had cleansed her from all unrighteousness, and that His love had been so plenteously and powerfully shed down upon her as to overpower the body. How gracious is the Lord!

March 1st.—A revival has at last broken out in our little flock. Yesterday morning brother Shepherd

found peace with God, who had applied a line of a hymn with much consolation to his heart,—

“How happy the man whose heart is set free!”

This morning also, brother Ottawill was roused with these words, “Arise; why tarriest thou? and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” He arose to prayer, and the Lord spoke peace to his soul. It is rather singular, this was both his birthday and his wedding-day, as well as the day of his espousal to God. O, it was delightful to see these two brothers and their wives praising the Lord together!

27th.—This moment a present of five guineas is brought to me for assisting Mr. Back in services he had done for the Board, and for which he had received a gratuity. This makes good a promise I received from the Lord some days ago. Being, myself, in a little debt, and called to assist a poor family in distress, I had scrupled the propriety of doing it. Immediately it occurred to my mind, that faith in God was better than ten thousand a year. I kneeled down to thank the Lord, and disposed of the gift in acts of charity.

April 9th.—This evening, for nearly an hour, I had great enlargement of heart and utterance in expounding 1 Cor. i. 9-11. O, praise the Lord for His abundant grace! I now find a comfortable assurance that my name shall never be blotted from the book of life. The Lord has assured me, that I shall go out of His house no more for ever. Jesus is mine, and I am His. The promise I once received, now comes with reviving force,—“Gad shall overcome at last.”

[May 2d, Mr. Valton wrote to Mr. William Holder, of Painswick, as under :—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“YOUR sufferings are what I foresaw while I was with you; and I know by your experience that the Lord is about to do greater things for you. He will shortly bruise Satan under your feet, and seal you to the day of redemption.

“There is a promise and glorious privilege, enjoyed but by few, because not earnestly desired and sought after,—an assurance wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, that we shall be ‘pillars in the temple of God, to go out no more for ever;’ and that ‘our name shall never be blotted from the book of life.’ O, my dear brother, if you have not received this promise, ask for it, and you shall have it! Then you shall find obedience an easy yoke, and your soul will abound in joy, like Jordan’s swelling flood, and your peace will flow as a river, with a deep and constant stream.

“For your encouragement, I will to you speak freely: I do enjoy that blessed assurance. I received it a few months after the blessing of entire sanctification; and I daily enjoy a heaven upon earth. Temptations often assault me, and sore temptations, too; business hurries me, and weakness oppresses me; and yet nothing alters my calm, solid, and uninterrupted hope of eternal salvation.

“My dear friend, be not then dejected, however you may be tempted. Quietly wait for His salvation, and you shall yet praise Him. Beware, my dear brother, that you never remit Christian duties: this will hurt your soul. You may be strongly, though imperceptibly, drawn to lethargy of soul. Keep

awake, as a Christian soldier. Be like the four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind. Your enemy slumbers not: you travel to Zion through hostile ground; therefore, keep on the armour of God. Go on, my dear friend: Zion's towers already appear. Salvation is nearer than when you believed. The Lord is ready to come, and His reward is with Him. May God bless you!

“I am, dear brother,

“Yours, in the Lord Jesus,

“JOHN VALTON.”]

May 11th.—Since last Sunday, I have been greatly tempted and exercised concerning my expounding the Scriptures. We have public meetings three times a week, besides my visits to Rainham, Nook-house, and Thurrock; and now our congregations, often, in times past, but ten or twenty, are so increased, that the Board will hear that I am become a preacher.

July 1st.—I propose, through the blessing of God, to be more minute in setting down my experience, as it may be useful to me at a future day. This day I have had hard conflicts with flesh and blood, and besought the Lord with earnest cries, that I might die rather than sin against Him. Yet I cannot say that I felt sin in my heart. May the Lord bless me with a watchful spirit, a pure heart, and a loving mind! When the thought comes, that it is expedient for me to marry, and that my soul might profit with a wife that truly loves the Lord; then the contrary thoughts come, that I should be unwilling to leave her when called to do good, and that I could not then be wholly devoted to God.

Lord, be my wisdom, and teach whatever is pleasing in Thy sight!

September 4th.—Being returned from Aveley, where I had been to visit brother Evans, lying sick of a fever, I found a message from one of my officers, who was sick. To my great surprise, it was, that I should pray with him! I did so, and exhorted him as far as I durst proceed. I wonder what he will think of himself, in case he should recover. Will he not be ashamed? The Lord be gracious to his soul!

11th.—Since Wednesday, the 7th, last, my soul has been abundantly refreshed. I was then ready to fly from my place. To-day, though weak in body, and obliged to lie down, I have enjoyed much consolation, and a hope full of immortality. I had strength, however, at night, to invite the weary and heavy laden to come to Christ.

30th.—Last night, though still weak in body and very dull, to a room full of people I expounded 1 John ii. 12. I found much difficulty the former part of the time; but when I came to the state of fathers in Christ, O, how did the blessed Spirit fill my heart, and open my mouth! I know not what the strangers thought, but I know the Lord had thoughts of many of them.

October 19th.—This morning I had great joy from one of my class calling to say, that the Lord had given her the second blessing, a new and a clean heart. When I am dry and discouraged in preaching, I often hear of some good, which comforts my soul, and strengthens my hands.

November 23d.—This being my birthday, when I entered my thirtieth year, I set the preceding day apart for humiliation and prayer, and in the evening

met my friends at the usual hour. A circumstance, which I deemed rather remarkable, happened at this time. A letter was put into my hand, as follows:—

“LONDON, *November 21st*, 1769.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“It is a great thing to be open to the call of God. It really seems as if He were now calling you. When I wrote last, you was not willing to go out; and, probably, He is now thrusting you out into His harvest. If so, take care you be not disobedient to the heavenly calling. Otherwise, you may be permitted to fall lower than you now imagine.

“I am

“Your affectionate brother,

“J. WESLEY.”

It is not easy to conceive what dejection of spirit I was thrown into by this letter. I could neither think nor pray. But can God require me to make bricks without straw? O no, Lord! Thou art not an austere man. Besides, my weakness, my timidity, and want of gifts, are to me proofs that I am not called. Nor have I the least intimation that it is the will of God. O, what a dreadful apprehension of such an undertaking! It almost deprives me of life when I think of being thrust out!—Suffice to say, I gave Mr. Wesley my reasons; which for the present satisfied his mind, as appears from his reply:—

“LONDON, *December 2d*, 1769.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“CERTAINLY you are not called to go out now. I believe you will be by-and-by. Your inabilities are

no bar ; for, when you are sent, you will not be sent on a warfare at your own cost. Now improve the present hour where you are.

“ I am

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ J. WESLEY.”

This letter was as pleasant as the grapes of Eshcol to my soul.

January 1st, 1770.—I endeavoured to expound the parable of the Barren Fig-tree. The room was crowded, and we had a soul born of God,—sister Bayley, who sent to say that the Lord had set her soul at liberty. Mr. Pool, a brother of Mr. Weaver, came to me with evident marks of being awakened. He said, he would join the society on his return to London ; for which I gave him a letter.

We now divided our little society into four classes ; viz., seven with me, nine with brother Weaver, four with brother Cockran, and four with brother Healey : in all twenty-four members.

April 5th.—Last night I was enabled to make a very awful and close exposition of Rev. i. 7 : “ Behold, He cometh with clouds.” A stranger present seemed much broken down.

15th.—Being Easter-day, we met for morning service. Four strangers were present. I endeavoured to expound Acts v. 30-32 ; but was so tried and tempted, that I was obliged to stop, and beg the people to pray ; after which I went on with the discourse, and many were much refreshed.

[Mr. Valton's journal now assumes another character. Four or five times every week we find him publicly and zealously engaged, except when public business required his evening attendance.

Therefore the more particular meetings only are noticed here.]

25th.—This evening Mr. John Allen, a young preacher in the London Circuit, came to see me : an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. He preached on adding to our faith virtue. His word was made a blessing to all. I had a temptation of Satan, that nobody would now care to hear me, after hearing so lovely a young man as this. While I admired his eminent gifts, and profound experience, united to the simplicity of a child, I was thankful to God for what I did enjoy. I know, if He see good, He will give me more ; and He even does crown my poor attempts with success.

May 23d.—Dr. Hugh Smith, being consulted on the state of my health, advised me to lay aside business for a time, and use exercise on horseback. In conformity to his advice, I arrived this evening at Mr. Whitbread's, a farmer at Kirksend, near Barnet. While staying with this obliging family, I had frequent opportunities of meeting the class at Bentley-Heath, and at Barnet, and also at Mr. Shewell's, an opulent family, that showed me much kindness.

June 3d.—This afternoon Mr. Allen preached at Bentley-Heath, on turning to the Strong-hold. It was a blessed time. In the evening he preached at Barnet. Next morning I rode with him to Whetstone, where he preached on the Trembling Gaoler.

29th.—To-day, after an absence of five weeks, I returned to Purfleet, having preached and met the classes at Barnet, Bentley-Heath, and Potter's-Bar, as my strength would admit ; and the Lord has given us His blessing.

July 3d.—Last night I endeavoured to illustrate that passage, "Behold, I stand at the door, and

knock." The Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon me in a very remarkable manner, both in praying and preaching. Since my return from Barnet, I praise the Lord for His goodness: my health has been much improved, and my soul has been wonderfully favoured. I now lie down and rise with great comfort and joy. The temptation under which I so long groaned has now vanished away, and never appeared since my return. But, alas! my poor flock have felt the absence of their shepherd: three of them have been overtaken in liquor, and one grossly so.

August 10th.—The last few days I have attended the Conference in London, and found much of the gracious presence of the Lord. My eyes were drowned in tears, and my soul filled with humility, praise, and love. The Conference now sitting in London, Mr. Whitefield, prior to his embarking for America, preached at five in the morning, and sat with the preachers till breakfast, and very much encouraged them to go on in their plain and humble way. He dropped several expressions of disapprobation, that several ministers in connexion with him had begun to wear a gown and bands.

September 3d.—Last night, in a crowded room, I cried, "Acquaint now thyself with Him," &c., (Job xxii. 21,) but found no liberty; I was shut up and tried most of the time. My memory often failed me, so that I almost forgot the thread of the discourse. A thought darted across my mind,—“I will speak no more in the name of the Lord.” I began to reason about it, and thought it might partly be owing to the weakness of my body, but chiefly to the dealings of God, who had justly withdrawn from me those gifts of which He saw I was

unworthy. May the Lord humble my soul to the dust, and sanctify His paternal corrections !

6th.—A party of us walked this evening to Rainham, to hear the Rev. Mr. Elliott. He delivered a strong discourse on predestination. Some parts of it made me tremble, they were so pleasing to flesh and blood ; yet I could by no means accede to his opinions. I was, however, engaged in argument till one o'clock in the morning. How different are these debates, from the simplicity which usually follows our meetings at Purfleet !

October 8th.—This evening, in a room full of people, I asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved ?" The Lord gave me great power, and the word went to the heart. Some were greatly alarmed, and others much stirred up. It was a time that will be long remembered. One young man, acquainted with religion, though not with Methodism, received the word with meekness. Another declared he would leave his lodging, to come nearer to us.

18th.—This morning sister Weaver came to say, that she had no doubt that the Lord had given her, two days ago, the blessing she had been earnestly seeking for three months,—a pure heart, and a token that, having justified her, He would also glorify her. Her soul was in transports of joy while she related these things. It also encouraged me ; for having had a dry time in expounding the word, I found the Lord had made it a great blessing.

November 5th.—Last evening I endeavoured to expound the twenty-third Psalm : "The Lord is my Shepherd," &c. Most of us found the Lord very present, and great refreshment. After the meeting, four persons gave in their names to join

the society. This, in some sort, prepared us for the solemn intelligence, which presently followed, that the Lord had called home, to his great reward, that eminent servant of Christ, the Rev. George Whitefield, who died near Boston, in New-England. I wept before the Lord for our sins of ingratitude and unfaithfulness, which might have provoked the Lord to remove that burning and shining light from among us.

December 2d.—Last week I have been much engaged in the business of the office and magazine; so that I have gone to preach without time for meditation; and this Sabbath I have been all the day engaged for my heavenly Master, except a little time when I was obliged to lie down. I had this evening a blessed time while expounding Rev. i. 5: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

25th.—This being the day of our Saviour's nativity, in our morning meeting I expounded Luke ii. 14. Having read to our friends, in the preceding week, a discourse on the Lord's Supper, a company of us walked to Thurrock church, and received the sacrament.

[On the last day of this year Mr. Valton writes: "How little have I done; and how small is the progress I have made during the past year! Lord, I fly to the arms of Thy mercy, and take shelter under the merits of redeeming love." He had only, when at home, held public meetings twice every Sabbath, and three times on the week-evenings, meeting classes after preaching. On the other three evenings we find him often preaching and meeting the class at Rainham, at Renham, and Thurrock, Nookhouse, &c. In a district so thinly

populated his congregations were small, but mostly enough to fill the house. What a man of God, tried with a thorn in the flesh, and encompassed about with manifold infirmities!]

January 26th, 1771.—This evening I went to spend the Sabbath in London, and meet Mr. Wesley at brother Windsor's. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend."

March 17th.—This morning I walked to Rainham, to meet the class, in brother Weaver's turn, he being sick: after dinner, I catechised the children; and in the evening addressed a crowded congregation, in which were many strangers; and one, having the appearance of a preacher, so embarrassed me, that I had no power. O, what I have suffered on this account, and times without number! I thought, if ever I went to Rainham or Dagenham after this, I should be ashamed to walk the street. However, two or three of the friends mentioned the comfort they had found under the word.

22d.—My mother having been many years absent in France, I had lately spent some time with her and my sister, and had often talked closely to her about religion. But it is hard to convince the Papists. They always fly off from the Bible to the Church. My mother being now taken ill, I spent four days in London, often talking to her, and left her much better in health than I found her.

September 10th.—This morning I set out again to spend a fortnight at Dugdale-Hill, near Barnet, for the benefit of my health, where I employ my time in meeting the class at Barnet. There I heard Mr. Gathercart on Mark xvi. 16: a better discourse surely I never heard.

December 25th.—I expounded Isaiah ix. 6, 7:

"Unto us a Child is born," &c. It was a time of heavenly refreshing. The Lord out of Zion gave us His blessing. At Purfleet, it might indeed be said, The Saviour was born there.

31st.—To-day I dined with Mr. Wesley, at Bow, and heard him preach at night. We held a watch-night, and ushered in the new year with singing and prayer. My temptations and sufferings during the past year have been small compared with preceding years. I have been enabled to go on preaching, and visiting the sick, in a constant course. My greatest trials have been timidity: when any well-dressed strangers have come in, I have scarcely been able to speak; and often have been ready to say, "I will speak no more in Thy name." But I could not recede: it was come to this, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." However, the success I met with, and the comfort I felt in my own soul, encouraged me to go on; for a class was formed in most of the parishes within the compass of an easy walk from Purfleet.

January 1st, 1772.—This evening I was at the renewing of the covenant at Spitalfields. It was a solemn time, and the blessing and presence of the Lord accompanied the means. But now, what shall I say of myself? I confess it is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed. I do not think that I am either so lively in my own soul, or so zealous in the work, as I have been. I am also many times in doubt whether I have not lost the blessing of a pure heart which I once enjoyed. But glory be to Thee, O my God, that Thou hast not given me up as an unprofitable servant! Grant, O Lord, that the course of the ensuing year may be employed more to Thy glory than the past!

3d.—Yesterday I returned from town, in the passage-boat, as usual, full of wicked people. I delivered my soul of them, and am clear of their blood. This evening I expounded the Barren Fig-tree, after which we renewed the covenant, as in London; and I believe our meeting was not in vain.

5th.—This Sabbath morning I walked to Rainham to meet the class, where I found a man and his wife, who had been awakened under Mr. Maxfield. In the evening, after preaching, one of the chalk people met us, who had been brought under serious impressions by hearing his child read the New Testament.

23d.—A poor woman came to me to visit her husband, a labourer at the chalk-works. I found him in a burning fever, and scarcely any covering on his bed, in the depth of winter. I kneeled down to pray to the great Physician in his behalf. I gave him Dr. James's powders, and afterwards milder physic; so that the man, though weak, was at his work again in the course of the week.

27th.—This evening, according to appointment, I visited the sick man again, preached in his room, and prayed the people, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. The people being eager for the word, I told them, if they would get a room, I would come to them. On that, Mr. Watson, a lime-burner, offered me one that will hold a hundred people. We measured it for benches, and I promised to visit them twice a week. Glory be to Thee, O Lord, for this opening! O that Thou wouldest give me such gifts and such graces as I need, to be a blessing to this people!

February 23d.—This evening, to about fifty people, I had a blessed season while explaining Eph. v. 8:

"Ye were sometimes darkness," &c. But I am embarrassed what to do. Mr. Bell, the manager of these works, so far approves of our meetings, that he seems inclined to build us a chapel. In that case we must have a preacher. Here is the difficulty.

March 25th.—Being in London, I went to the Apothecaries' Hall to pay for some medicines; and, to my great surprise, found the bill to come to a guinea and a half! I was in a strait, not having money enough. However, I borrowed a little of a friend. On taking tea with brother Chambers, Mr. Dornford (a wine merchant) came in: we walked to the chapel together; and, after preaching, he took me home, and gave me two papers of James's powders, a bottle of spirits of wine, some Bibles, and a guinea to buy medicine with. This was surely the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in my eyes. This good has resulted from my giving medicine; and a door is opened for the Gospel among the poor chalk people. Add to this, on arriving at home, I found a guinea had been sent me by the Russian ambassador, for doing him a service about a year ago.

June 21st.—Mr. Allen paid us a second visit at Purfleet, and spent the Sabbath. His sermon in the morning, on the Sun of Righteousness, (Mal. iv. 2, 3,) and in the evening, on examining ourselves whether we are in the faith, were heard with much attention, and the approbation of the people.

August 12th.—I am now returned from Dover, where I have been for almost seven weeks for the benefit of the salt water. The preacher being absent, the Lord gave me power and courage to preach four times a week; and I have reason to believe the Lord made me of great use to the people. To Him be all the glory.

I had now an offer made me by the Earl of D——r to be page of the presence to the queen. I laid this overture, flattering in itself, before the Lord. The result was, my heart being on the sanctuary, that I was at Purfleet secluded and quiet; that I feared a post of honour, and at court, too; and having already a small clerkship under Government, which was quite sufficient for my support, I thankfully declined it in favour of Mr. Cooper, my sister's husband. Another reason was, that I had a few souls to care for; and, above all, a soul of my own; and I chose rather (yet not I, but the grace of God in me) to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the favour, honours, and riches of a court. Adieu, vain world, stand aloof with thy slighted charms! The Lord is my portion.

September 4th.—I received a letter of thanks from my brother C. for conceding the place, which to him was worth £200 per annum.

December 14th.—Last night I had a good time, and was enabled to discourse on the Beatitudes with great power. A self-righteous man, and one who had been of a bitter spirit, came up and thanked me for the sermon. This evening I and four of the brethren united to get an evening school for the poor children of the lime-burners, who are obliged to work by day. I trust we shall not only teach them to read and write, but also to be Christians. May the Lord succeed our work!

30th.—To-day I received a letter from my sister, acquainting me, that an officer had dined with my Lord D——r, and told him that I had got a congregation, and preached to them; and that I also kept a school. My lord had told my father of it,

adding, that those things would obstruct my promotion; which had made my father's mind very uneasy; and he requested me to leave off all those things, as it would augment the happiness of his family.

Satan always delights to afflict the afflicted. This letter came to hand at a moment when I was greatly tempted about preaching. I had also much temporal business on my hands; and was fearing that some of the gentry belonging to the chalk-works would drop in to hear me. May the Lord support me! for nothing but love glowing in the soul can make us zealous and persevering in every good work. If love decay, we shall soon become unfruitful. O Lord, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded!

At the close of the year, having preached on the end of all things being at hand, I was in some doubt, whether I still retained the pure and perfect love of God. O my God, do not suffer me to fall from the grace which Thou hast conferred; but do Thou establish me for ever in righteousness and true holiness!

January 1st, 1773.—Entering now on another year of grace, I sit down to consider my state. I now, through mercy, enjoy a measure of the fruits of the Spirit. I love the Lord my God above money, place, or preferment. Still I have reason to complain, as I do not now enjoy the love that casteth out fear; and have not the firm persuasion of the promise once given to me, that "I shall overcome at last."

Some time ago, I remember that, through very perplexing trials and temptations, I was led publicly to declare that I had lost the pure love of God. But

scarcely had I yielded to do this, before I became sensible that my unbelief at this juncture had effected what I before only supposed had been done; and the Lord has chastised my giving place to unbelief, as I have never since had a clear testimony of being saved from sin. However, for some years I have enjoyed almost a continued calm in my own breast, and felt a constant longing after my heavenly home.

June, 1774.—Towards the middle of this year my constitution was brought into a weak and reduced state; but, having changed the low and vapourish air of this place, I was, in the course of three months, enabled to return to the office.

For the last few years I have been fully employed, after the hours of office, in preaching, catechising, and teaching in the school every night in the week, with the exception of a Saturday, now and then; and there was a prospect of much good resulting from the school, had not the wicked parents of the children frustrated the hope, by allowing them to run wild on the Sabbaths.

Another thing I undertook, in compassion to the poor, was, the administering of medicine to the sick. This stripped me of money, exhausted my time, and involved me in debt. I bought an electrifying machine, and learned to bleed. I principally aimed at gaining access to sick-beds, and being useful to the souls of the people; and I must own, that the Lord most wonderfully prospered my undertakings. The blind, the halt, and the languid, came, and received relief or cure. This success brought a crowd of patients. Their diseases obliged me to study books, and the remedies exhausted my pockets. And though Providence remarkably assisted me, yet

the loss of time, and the want of adequate means, greatly hurt my soul. Thus it was, that in the zenith of my popularity and entanglements, God made a way for my escape, by removing me out of the place. And I humbly trust that the souls that have been convinced and converted will be my crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

These incessant labours, and the unwholesome air of Purfleet, so reduced my constitution, that the physician told me my employment was not fit for my health. Another eminent man spoke in stronger words, that I was murdering myself, and that no expedient would restore me but exercise on horseback.

In this strait and dilemma, I wrote to ask the advice of a few preachers eminent for wisdom and holiness; and they all with one voice advised me to give up all, and take a Circuit. Among these was Mr. Samuel Wells, with whom, in my visit to Gloucestershire, I had become acquainted. He was a lovely youth, of classical literature; and one who, I believe, enjoyed the pure love of God. He wrote in a very decisive manner; adding, "I do not know but God has spoken the word, **PREACH OR DIE.**" This last word turned the trembling balance.

After the reception of these letters, I calmly came to the conclusion to forsake all, and, like Jacob, set out with my staff in my hand. But for some weeks my temptations to *delay* and *recede* were more violent than ever. Unknown are the sufferings through which I then passed. Seldom had I more than two hours' sleep; all was weeping and wailing before the Lord. On the one hand were the opposition of my family, and all their disappointed hopes of my preferment; on the other, my natural timidity, my

health, and inability. Often did I retire to a neighbouring wood, and spend hours in bitter lamentations and cries before the Lord, praying for power to come forth. At length, early one morning, I rose, and, with the best preparation that haste could make, I came off to London. I there wrote my letter of resignation; and then, spreading it before the Lord, I fell on my knees, and said, "O Lord, I thank Thee for having given me this place for almost eighteen years. And now, seeing Thou requirest Thy own, lo! here I present to Thee that which is Thine, and cast myself on Thy providence." This I said with a melting heart, and with eyes deluged with tears.

1775.—After my letter of resignation, and all the way to the Leeds Conference, O, how was I assaulted by the enemy, for having made all these sacrifices for God, when, it was suggested, there was no God! For some days I was enveloped in a cloud of atheism. Surely had it not been for this sore temptation, I could not have known the strength and malignity of a fallen angel. But on arriving at Leeds, and lodging with a cheerful Christian family, all these bodings vanished away; nor have I ever since been assailed with the like injections of the enemy. None, however, but the Lord Himself can tell what I passed through for the last two months before I came to Leeds. This I can truly say, that the Lord has thrust me out into the work; for in no one's case, perhaps, did ever such a group of concurring circumstances meet to make manifest the will of God. And now, O Lord, seeing Thou hast brought me forth, do with me as seemeth good in Thy sight, and send me wheresoever Thou wilt.

One circumstance tended to humble me. A few evenings before the Conference, Mr. Pawson, the superintendent of the Leeds Circuit, desired me to preach. The congregation was unusually large, compared with the small groups in Essex, and two or three times my memory failed me; but the people professed to be much blessed under the word. Here my soul was exceedingly happy, being all the day engaged in spiritual exercises.

August 2d, 1775.—I was this day admitted on trial as a preacher, and appointed to the Oxfordshire Circuit, which comprised part of three other counties. My colleagues were Samuel Wells, jun., and George Shorter. It was joy to me to labour with a man that I knew and loved.

Another boon of equal joy seemed to drop from heaven. On arriving at Witney, the first place in the Circuit, I found a letter requiring my presence in London. Here, to my infinite surprise, I found all my relations very cordial, and not a word of reproach on my conduct: and during the few days I was in town, the most high God, in His providence, made a comfortable provision for me for life; so that I can preach without being burdensome, and have a tolerable competency for age, when infirmities may admonish me to retire. I was overwhelmed with this astonishing token of the goodness of God, for which I desire to praise Him for ever.

[Mr. Valton does not say what was the amount of the pension granted him for eighteen years' service; but it was not less than forty pounds a year. In consequence of this, he never would take any allowance from the Circuits, except his food. He travelled as a single man, and a gentleman; giving the surplus of his money to the poor.]

In the Oxfordshire Circuit I laboured for two years. It was a very hard Circuit, the rides were long, and fuel very scarce; but the Lord was my support. The first year was a pruning time; the second was a year in which we gathered many souls. It was a great trial to me to leave this loving people, and so many excellent families; but, as the Lord so required, I bowed to His will.

[Mrs. Weaver, whose husband succeeded Mr. Valton as leader of the classes in Purfleet, told me, that Mr. Valton came about this time to visit the little flock he had gathered with so many toils and tears, and strengthened their hands in the Lord. During this visit an officer came to see him, and, finding him now dressed in a plain suit of black, exclaimed, "What, is this the little gentleman that came to us in a cocked hat, and a gold-laced waistcoat?" "It is, sir," rejoined the other; "but the Lord, since that time, has done something under the waistcoat." After this, Mr. Whitbread, celebrated in parliamentary records, built a little chapel, and gave a Bible; but the preachers, on account of distance, often neglecting, and a Calvinistic schoolmaster settling there, who was a preacher, the Methodists were gradually superseded.]

At the Bristol Conference, 1777, I was appointed for the Gloucestershire Circuit; and, blessed be God, our labour was not in vain. Our rides were often long, travelling from Stourport, Worcester, and Stroud. The friends would have borne with me a second year, but my constitution was so impaired as not to be able to bear the extensive journeys. I cannot, however, omit naming the lovingkindness of the Lord to me this year. When seized with a bilious fever, which lasted some weeks, my lot

was cast at Stroud. Here I met with the tenderest of nurses and friends, in Mrs. Scudamore and her family, who had me removed to their house, and showed me no little kindness; where, with the help of God, and a skilful apothecary, I was soon restored to my labours. During the whole of this year I have found much peace in my own soul, which has the more supported me under the hardships of an itinerant life.

In 1778 I was appointed to the Bristol Circuit. As soon as I received the letter from Leeds, my soul was in the furnace; being awed at the idea of standing before so many wise and holy persons, as then were in Bristol and Bath. I wrote immediately to Mr. Wesley, praying to be sent anywhere rather than to those cities. But he still kept to his appointment, in spite of all remonstrances. My distress and timidity continued for some days; but, laying it before the Lord one evening, I was much relieved by two lines of a hymn, powerfully applied to my mind,—

“Wait thou His time; so shall this night
Soon end in joyous day.”

I came to Bristol in a weak state of health, and was presently obliged to retire to a kind friend's house, near Pensford, where Mr. and Mrs. Wait showed me every kindness for the restoration of my strength. Here I gave myself up to prayer, which increased my spiritual strength also, and enabled me to enter on my work with joy. I have cause to rejoice that I had in Mr. John Goodwin and Mr. James Wood the kindest of colleagues. In Paulton the work broke out wonderfully; and about eighty souls were added to the society, and a preaching-house was soon afterwards erected. The

effect of the word on the poor colliers was such as I had never witnessed before. At Fishponds, also, we had a blessed revival of religion. This was, indeed, a year of consolation; the people were uncommonly affectionate, and I should have been glad to end my days among them.

1779.—My second year in the Bristol Circuit was attended with some heavy trials, particularly the dispute which happened between the superintendent and the clergyman Mr. Wesley had stationed at the new chapel in Bath. The issues were, that Mr. M'Nab left the Connexion, and the clergyman set up for himself, in Dublin, taking with him above a hundred persons, amongst whom were the richer members of the Dublin society. This dispute gave a general wound to the cause. However, the time I was there, I enjoyed a heaven upon earth, and left the friends with many regrets. The last place I left was Amesbury, where I remained a fortnight for my health, and experienced every kindness from the lady of the house for her Master's sake. Mr. M'Nab, however, returned the next year; but did not continue long in the Circuit.

1780.—At the Bristol Conference I was ordered for the Manchester Circuit, as the assistant preacher. On arriving, my soul entered into great sufferings. The regrets at leaving my Bristol friends, and the dread I had upon my mind concerning the office that was laid upon me, quite drank up my spirit. However, I set my shoulders to the work, and endeavoured to lay out my soul in the discharge of every duty. God was so far pleased to own me, and Mr. George Snowden, my fellow-labourer, that nearly three hundred souls were added in the town; and there was a general revival throughout the

Circuit. At Stockport the chapel was enlarged, and at Ashton a new one erected, and a promising prospect of a great work in the ensuing year.

When I came first into this Circuit, I was quite a stranger to the habits and complexion of the people; and I construed their shyness to strangers into want of love. Some of the stronger trees and plants are slower in opening their bud and bloom. The issues were, that I found them a most affectionate, generous, and steady people; and, with tears in my eyes at parting, I could say, that they lie near my heart.

The main circumstance which encouraged me was, the breaking out of the work of God in different parts of the Circuit. My constitution I found too weak to bear the journeys, and was obliged to call for additional help in a third preacher. This set us at liberty to try and take in new places.

This work would have been more extensive, had it not been for two or three leading members of the Rochdale society, who demanded an unjust share of our labours. Their opposition was so strong, that it quite broke my spirit, and cramped my future usefulness. It obstructed all my intended visits to the populous villages.

Sometime during the winter I went with a few of my Oldham friends to a village called Gladwick, consisting of colliers and weavers. I preached in a house with comfort and joy to thirty or forty people, and many felt the power of the word. I visited the village a second time, and was favoured with the same blessing and presence of God. But on going the third time, and with a design to preach in the open air, as Satan's kingdom began to suffer, several being awakened and joined to the society, the enemy

collected his forces, armed with stones and noisy instruments, to make a furious attack. They literally gnashed upon me with their teeth, and so pelted me with stones and coals, that, after a while, I was obliged to retire into the house. Thank God, I was unhurt. We sung and praised the Lord in the house. Meanwhile, the mob was waiting without for another assault; and as soon as I and my few friends were out of doors, dirt and stones were poured amain: yet none of us were hurt, except a woman, who received a severe cut in the head.

These storms without were small, compared with the inward conflict I had from myself. When the large new chapel in Oldham-street was opened, and when I saw such large congregations, I suffered inconceivably from my old feelings of timidity. Standing in that pulpit was like standing to be shot. The good and gracious Lord, however, brought me through the year.

1781.—At the Leeds Conference I was appointed a second year for Manchester; but, fearing some extraordinary trials from different parts of the Circuit, and disapproving from my soul of some late things which had occurred, I entreated that I might be sent to Birstal. But my kind friends in Manchester were determined not to part with me without an answer to their petition: so I left the contest, having obtained leave to go and bathe at Liverpool; where I experienced every kindness from the people, and spent my time to much profit and comfort to my own soul.

My lot having fallen for Birstal, I was received with undeserved affection by the people. This encouraged me to undertake some difficult things with regard to discipline, at which my nature shrank.

And yet, through the help of God, I was brought through full as well as I expected. This I found a most easy and suitable Circuit to me, as I could not then, on account of pain in my breast, bear much riding. Yet, how favoured soever our lot may be, it is through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom of God; and the path of suffering is the road to glory. I have learned lately a useful lesson,—to cease from man, and seek my all from God. Amidst all difficulties, I enjoy abundance of peace with God; and can sweetly appeal to Him, that His glory, the good of His church, and the salvation of my own soul, are the ruling principles of my heart: and, indeed, they are the sole objects that I have in view. I am a poor nothing in His sight. As to any warm and strong expressions, which may set individuals against me, I cannot help them. I must have liberty of speech, and deliver my soul, when speaking in the presence of the Lord and of His people.

I experienced the greatest kindness and support from my colleagues, Messrs. Briscoe and Shaw; through whose aid good has been done; besides a remarkable promise of a revival sealed upon my heart. The promise was given me on this wise:—I was at Dawgreen, the southern part of the town of Dewsbury. Being alone in my chamber, I prostrated myself before the Lord, to ask the outpouring of His Spirit on so populous a neighbourhood, while my eyes were suffused with tears. I then came down to engage in family prayer; and the power of God fell upon me, enabling me to pray with much enlargement, as the Spirit gave me utterance. I had a blessed revival before my eyes, and we praised God by way of anticipation; for I was fully assured

the Lord was about to work. My petitions were uttered in the assurance of faith; for I knew that God would make bare His holy arm. The family felt the Divine unction; and I continued till I could scarcely rise from my knees. I went up stairs; but could engage in no work, except prayer and praise. My soul was truly in travail for Zion to bring forth children.

I should not omit one unpromising check on the ardent wishes of my heart; a great loss to us, but not a damp on our hope. Mr. Fletcher, on the 12th of November, stole hallowed fire from my people, by taking away Miss Bosanquet to Madeley. I and a few friends accompanied them to Batley church. Surely such a blessed wedding I never knew before. By request, I improved the occasion in the evening from these words,—“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon His name.” It was truly a refreshing time; and many prayers were offered, that eternal blessings might crown the devoted pair.

My soul shares in the divine joy of my honoured father and friend, Mr. Fletcher. My whole heart is engaged in the work of the Lord. But my spirit is often too active for my body. The weight of Saul's armour is a sore clog to my spirit. Hoping to live and die in my Master's cause, my frequent prayer has been that I might close my life and my work together. My soul is happy, and enjoys constant peace; and often Divine transports possess my breast. Jesus is the soul of all my joys; He is my theme of praise, and my all in all for ever. With confidence I can declare in the congregations of the people that crowd to hear His word,—

"Ye all may know that God is true,
Ye all may feel that God is love."

October 28th, 1782.—This evening I preached at Hanging-Heaton, a village near Dewsbury, with much power; and many felt the mighty energy of the word. After preaching I met the society; and while singing the first hymn, the power of the Lord fell upon me, and, soon after, upon all the people. They were all in tears, and we scarcely knew how to conclude. I had never known such a night since I left Paulton, in Somerset. God was, indeed, in the midst of us, and we all rejoiced with unspeakable joy.

December 26th.—After preaching twice this day, and riding twenty miles, I walked to Hanging-Heaton to hold a watch-night. The service of preaching, prayer, and exhortations continued from seven o'clock to one in the morning. Here the work broke out in a very astonishing and extraordinary manner. The cries and agonies of the people were very moving. We sang and prayed till near twelve, and no deliverance was wrought. I then went to one who seemed to be agonizing in prayer. I kneeled down, and prayed with her for deliverance as far as my exhausted strength would permit; and presently she found peace. I then went to another; and she also, in a few minutes, found peace. Thus four or five were set at liberty in the same manner. In all, nine persons that night obtained a sense of God's forgiving love. I never knew such a time before. O that God may bless and keep them in His faith and fear!

31st.—This night I went to Earl's-Heaton, and had a good time. One young woman wept aloud for the disquietness of her soul. She was cruelly

handled by the enemy for a long time. I prayed and sang verses of hymns till my nature was exhausted ; but she still affected our hearts with her piercing cries and throes. At length I went to her, and kneeled down in earnest prayer. She soon became calm, and returned home with several friends rejoicing in the Lord. I trust the Lord will here also revive His work.

January 20th, 1783.—Two evenings ago we held a watch-night at Chidsill, and had an excellent time. It lasted for five hours. Four persons were very earnestly groaning and crying for mercy for a long time. Two or three of them were so deeply convinced that they trembled like a leaf in the wind. At last three of them obtained mercy, and went home rejoicing in the Lord. Another dropped down on the floor, and many were deeply wounded.

21st.—Last night, at Hanging-Heaton, we had a wonderful time ; and the power of the Lord was present both to wound and heal. After the sermon we continued in prayer for two or three hours, amid the groans and cries of many in distress. We told the Lord that we would not depart without their deliverance ; and God was graciously pleased to grant our importunate requests. We then gave thanks, and sang joyful hymns of praise.

23d.—This evening I preached at Danbrook, on Dewsbury-Bank. As soon as I began giving out the first hymn, I felt the power of God descend upon me ; and gave notice to the people that we should have a glorious time. Presently cries, and groans, and agonizing prayers were heard all around ; and several were in distress. In a while the anguish of their hearts was removed, and their souls entered the glorious liberty of the children of God. How

marvellous are Thy ways, O King of Saints! Ride on in Thy chariot, and with Thy great and strong sword strike the head of Leviathan, that crooked serpent! Amen, Lord Jesus; Amen.

27th.—This evening we held a watch-night at Ruth Williamson's, near Tingley-Moor. The congregation was large; and the Lord made it a time of refreshing from His presence. Cries, tears, and prayers were poured out for some hours. Three found peace with God, and were made remarkably happy in His love. Two of them experienced much anguish, and uttered the most moving prayers.

February 1st.—At Chidsill this evening we had an awful time with the people. Three were under strong convictions of sin. One young woman was roughly handled. At length she cried out, "Let me lie prostrate at my Saviour's feet," and immediately was made happy in God. We had reason to believe that three of those under conviction found peace.

3d.—I called this morning, by request, to pray with a sick woman at a public-house, in Shaycross, who had been no friend to religion. Presently, several of the neighbours were gathered into the house. While I was at prayer, violent convictions seized the sick woman, which communicated to others who were present. They cried earnestly for mercy, and with many tears. I continued in prayer till two of them were set at liberty. This was indeed a solemn and awful hour. But my poor body fails under the pressure of these ardours and fatigues. Yet I rejoice in spending my whole strength for my Master, and bemoan the insufficiency of my frame to support the energies of the mind.

12th.—This evening, after preaching at Daw-green, I desired the bands to meet, to speak their experience as usual; but our attention was presently called off to assist a young person who had been under conviction during the sermon. Several others soon felt the power of grace; while some made it known in the village, that the work was broken out in the chapel. They came rushing in, and were seized with Divine solemnity and awe. About ten o'clock the prayers began to subside, when it appeared four or five persons had found peace.

13th.—This evening I preached at Batley, but with little power, my nature being exhausted with the exertions of the three former nights. However, it was soon found necessary to continue the service, as several "were pricked in their heart," and, after some conflicts, professed to have obtained comfort from the Lord. In all these watch-nights I have been assisted by the leaders of these classes; for God has been pleased to employ plain and weak instruments in the accomplishment of His great work. Blessed be His great and glorious name for ever!

March 3d.—This afternoon I catechised the children at Hanging-Heaton; and while in prayer, many of them began to cry aloud for mercy, and continued for the space of two hours. I believe that they all, for the time, felt a good influence on their hearts. Thus, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the Lord has ordained strength."

4th.—This forenoon was spent in visiting the people from house to house, and the afternoon in meeting classes to renew the tickets. After sermon at night we continued in prayer till midnight. The Divine presence descended on the people, exciting

them to weep and pray. Nine persons found peace and comfort, while many others remained under conviction.

11th and 12th.—At Ardsley and Morley I held watch-nights the preceding evenings; while many have wept aloud in distress, and some found peace with God.

13th.—We had a watch-night at Birstal, and on the 14th at Gildersome; and the Lord was in the midst of our assembly. I was nearly worn out; but, thanks be to God, towards the close of the meeting my lamp was replenished with fresh oil, and I was amazed at my support during the week.

24th.—After visiting the society at Hanging-Heaton, from house to house, most of the day, I preached in Joseph Bennett's room, with great power; and many were deeply wounded under the word. We continued in prayer, singing short hymns at intervals, for about three hours, amid the cries and groans of the contrite. Some found peace, and others went home in deep distress. The next morning I went to see two poor mourners. Others came into the room, and, while singing and praying, one found peace; but several others were left in distress.

25th.—This evening I preached at Earl's-Heaton, in a rather dull manner; being much disturbed by the constant coming in of the people. However, when we began singing and prayer, at the close of the sermon, the Spirit of the Lord was poured down upon us. The cries were so strong and loud that we could not be distinctly heard, while others fainted and were convulsed. We continued these exercises and wrestlings for the space of five hours. Here the enemy of souls made the most violent

opposition to our work that I had ever seen. O, how did it endear the Saviour to me, who hears prayer, and delivers His people from the cruel tortures of the foe! It was an awful time; but the cries of the people were cheered with verses of praise, sung for those who had found peace. I trust many will have cause to bless God for ever for having brought them to that place.

29th.—This evening I preached a funeral sermon at Chidsill, and afterwards kept a watch-night. The whole of the services were in the open air; a lantern supplying the absence of the sun and the moon. It was a very solemn time indeed, and attended with a general blessing. Some hundreds of people were present; and four, I was told, found peace with God.

April 1st.—I was obliged to spend nearly three hours out of doors at Tingley-Moor. The crowd was very large; and the Lord owned the means by the conversion of a few who came to hear.

12th.—At Chidsill we again prolonged our worship, with a very large crowd in the open air. Some were deeply distressed, and a few were set at liberty.

14th.—This evening, the crowd being great, we got into a barn, at Hanging-Heaton. Ten, I was told, among whom was a backslider, found peace with God. These wrestlings and intercessions continued for five hours. Like the gay world, in their balls, we stayed till the midnight hour.

15th.—This evening we had a wonderful time at Batley-Carr. The rich, as well as the poor, mingled in the crowd. Misses Kitty and Nancy Wooller were the chief mourners. Miss Newsome found peace with God, and is since taken to paradise.

16th.—At Morley we had another watch-night;

and had it not been for the unbecoming prayers of two young converts, I believe we should have had a wonderful time. This was the first appearance of wildfire that we have had; and I was sorely distressed about it. I feared to speak, lest I should do harm. But Morley being a Presbyterian town, ordinary means perhaps cannot affect them. I felt a great want of wisdom, and entreated the Lord to teach me how to manage these appearances of disorder. We closed the meeting, leaving two or three in distress.

25th.—Having changed with the Huddersfield preacher, I went to Mirfield, and met the society after preaching. I advised them to hold prayer-meetings after sermons; and, above all things, to pray for the promise of the Father. I proved that the work in the Birstal Circuit was scriptural; adding my belief, that the reason why we did not see more conversions after sermons was, because we knew not the Scriptures, nor the power of God. While I was speaking, the power of God fell upon two or three persons; and presently there was a loud cry. We continued in prayer for two hours; and one soul found favour with the Lord.

May 7th.—We held another watch-night at Dawgreen. Soon after the close of the sermon, we heard a cry for pardon and peace. The spirit of contrition was poured upon us. Some found peace and joy through believing; while others went away in distress, being advised to lay their case before the Lord at home.

8th.—We had a large congregation in a barn at Batley; for the *laythes*, or barns, at this season were empty. Many were cut down under the word; and two cried aloud for mercy, “and were heard in that they feared.”

14th.—Last night we had a watch-night at Heckmondwike; and we had, in the issue, a very awful time. A small company stopped behind, to whom I spoke on laying hold of the promises. The word was like lightning. Some were deeply affected. We continued in prayer till midnight, when four persons found redemption through the blood of Christ.

I am quite astonished how my poor body bears up under these exercises and fatigues. But all things are possible to God. Surely an omnipotent arm is displayed in this work. My breast is torn with a cough, and I am often more fit to go to bed than to pray night and day, as I am obliged to do in this revival of religion: yet I get through my work. O God, I bless Thee for Thy grace! My soul is all on fire to save poor sinners from the miseries of the fall. My life to me is nothing; though I would not purposely kill myself: yet, be the consequences what they may, souls I will endeavour to save.

It is amazing what untruths and false reports are spread abroad concerning this revival of religion. Many hard reflections are personally cast on me. I can, however, praise the Lord, that my eye is single, and my intentions are pure. These reproaches tend to deaden me to the praise of men, and even to the esteem of good people. I will seek my all in God, and take as many with me to glory as I can. O God, "give unto Thy servant a wise and understanding heart, that he may go in and out before so great a people!" Here I am; do with me and my frail body as seemeth good in Thy sight!

"My life—if Thou preserve my life—
Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death—if death shall be my doom—
Shall join my soul to Thee."

July 1st.—Sister Briscoe expecting to remove, I met her class, in order to divide it, and to appoint fresh leaders. We had a full room; and in my last prayer, the Lord visited us indeed. Such a night I scarcely ever knew. Heaven seemed to come down to earth. Now it was that the promise given me, nearly a year and a half ago, was fulfilled to the letter; and in the very spot where it was first applied to my heart. Many, and at the same instant, cried aloud for mercy, and all seemed to attest the refreshing power of the Divine presence. One young woman was much distressed. I pleaded the promise (John xvi. 23) in her behalf, that God would give us whatsoever we should ask in the name of Christ; and she rose calm and serene. The watch-night kept here the ensuing evening was attended by a crowd of people, equal to a Sabbath-evening congregation.

3d.—This night, at Hanging-Heaton, I was six hours on my legs. The crowd was large, and we had a wonderful time. One aged man dropped down on the floor, and many cried aloud, and were comforted. Some of the brethren continued in prayer till three in the morning. This was truly one of the days of the Son of Man.

7th.—Being on my way to the Bristol Conference, I called on my old friends at Ashton, among whom I had laboured when in the Manchester Circuit. After preaching I met the society, and gave them an account of the great work of God in the Birstal Circuit. I then particularly insisted on the doctrine I had lately enforced, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Presently, the cries, groans, and prayers of the people drowned my voice, and the power of God rested on

us in a wonderful manner. One received pardon, another perfect love, and a backslider was restored. Much more good was done, I believe, than was known. We continued some time in prayer; for it seemed as if the people could not leave the throne of grace.

[Mr. Valton does not give any particulars of the Bristol Conference. Being the clerk, and without any assistance, he would be much taken up with the duties of his office.]

August 20th.—This year I returned from Bristol to labour another year in the Birstal Circuit. But, in looking over my journal, I find my accounts this year much the same as in the past. Our watch-nights, prayer-meetings, and lovefeasts were owned of God. The work of the Lord went on prosperously, and many were convinced and converted to God. A new and beautiful chapel was begun at Dewsbury; and it is with great pleasure I add, that the young converts remained steadfast in religion. But the heavy burden of being assistant (to Mr. Wesley) in the care of two thousand people in society, and the many watch-nights that I kept, with all the fears and anxieties that I felt for my Circuit, sensibly sapped my constitution. Violent headaches, often accompanied with giddiness, almost overcame me. Nevertheless, through a great flow of natural spirits, and the daily help I received from the Lord, I was enabled to bear up through the year. I need not say what I felt, and what the people suffered, when I took my leave of them.

August 3d, 1784.—This day our Conference at Leeds ended in much harmony and love. My appointment was for Bradford, in Yorkshire; only a few miles from the scenes of my former labours.

But having a slight enlargement in my ankle indicating a scrofulous affection, my health required the use of sea-bathing; and on the next day I set out for Hartlepool, and preached at Ripon and Stockton in my way. I remained there about a fortnight, and often preached in the town and villages round about. The Lord graciously assisted me, and I hope my labours were not in vain.

26th.—This day I returned to my new Circuit at Bradford [which then comprised the three Circuits of Bradford, Halifax, and Sowerby-Bridge]. My first care was to lay the people before the Lord, and implore His presence and blessing; and here the Lord gave me a promise, and very encouraging tokens in my own soul, that He would, in a glorious manner, revive His work. Mr. John Shaw, my colleague in the Birstal Circuit, accompanied me to this place. He was a holy man, and a powerful preacher, and concurred in all my measures for the good of the work; though, from his very corpulent habit of body, he could not move out of his ordinary course.

28th.—Being at Elland, the first place at which I preached, my spirits were very low. At night, however, we had a good time, and a general blessing was poured on the people. Two or three were deeply affected, and wept much before the Lord. This I could not but regard as a pledge of future good.

In this new sphere of labour I continued preaching, and often holding prayer-meetings, till the beginning of October, when I was prevailed upon, by the advice of a physician, to cease from speaking, and for a time to retire from all public labours. I felt great regrets at this; as the fields already

began to ripen for the harvest. I found afterwards that I had just retreated in time: had I gone on a few weeks longer, I had gone beyond the reach of medicine. My head and breast were sorely afflicted. I frequently lost my memory, and my understanding was often beclouded. In short, I was reduced so low that I scarcely durst read a chapter in the family before prayer. At this juncture, I received a kind invitation from brother and sister Beecroft, of Kirkstal Forge, to make their house my home.

[It was on the first Sabbath that Mr. Valton came to Bradford, I had the pleasure to see and hear this man of God; and from the time that he knew me, he became my father and friend. Like him, I had exhorted a whole year without taking a text. He encouraged me in the work, made me the leader of a class, and nearly at the same time sent me a Plan, as a local preacher. At the end of the two years, in 1786, he recommended me at the Bristol Conference to Mr. Wesley, by whom I was sent to Redruth, in Cornwall. This to me was utterly unexpected; for, judging myself inadequate to such a work, I was then turning my views towards a school, which I thought would be my lot for life.

[The first time Mr. Valton met the society in Bradford, he told us of the promise he had received of the Lord concerning a revival of the work in the Bradford Circuit; and though afflictions checked the ardour of his soul, yet the presence of the Lord everywhere so accompanied his labours, that, at the end of two years, there was a great increase of members, besides the erection and enlargement of chapels.

[His method of preaching very much resembled that of Mr. Wesley. It was clear in ideas, earnest in address, and his word was often accompanied with such powerful strokes as reached the hearts of the people. The gentleman of polished manners, and the classical scholar, were all lost in his bold attacks on error and vice, and in his warm and earnest exhortations to the people. He set about his Master's work as a workman that needed not to be ashamed. His voice was clear and sonorous; just strong enough to be distinctly heard in the larger chapels; yet he was best heard in the large rooms, which Methodism at that time was thankful to enjoy. Here he shone, while every sentence opened with instruction, and every stroke seemed as the hammer to drive the nail. He eminently possessed what Erasmus requires in a minister,—a fountain of eloquence in his own breast. No wonder he should in most places always be attended with a crowded auditory.]

[It was his lively manner of preaching, and his good and healthy appearance in the pulpit, which operated against him in the estimation of his hearers, when they understood that he must retire for a time: they could scarcely be persuaded that he ailed anything. His physician, however, having superior knowledge of his infirmities, as superinduced by excess of speaking, restricted him, as Mr. Shaw told me, to a *total silence*. He did not allow him even to articulate *yes* or *no*, till he should find the pain removed from his lungs and vocal powers. This medical opinion was correct, as will appear from Mr. Valton's own words.]

After being a few weeks at the Forge, I yielded to the importunity of the people, and met the class;

but even this small exertion brought on all my former pains, in such a degree, that I thought I should have died during the night. However, in the beginning of November, I returned to my Circuit; for the people said, they would excuse my preaching if I would reside among them. So I left my Kirkstal friends in tears; but was obliged to be silent in all for many months.

May 18th, 1785.—For the last few months I have only ventured to pray and exhort, as the Lord gave me strength; and yet my word has been owned, much the same as if I had preached, in the conviction and conversion of several souls. But, alas! even these exertions occasion a return of all my former pains. I am therefore advised again to retire, and shall set out this morning for Scarborough.

June 25th.—This day I returned to Bradford, having found relief by bathing in the sea; but have preached several times in different places, and attended prayer-meetings; and the Lord has blessed my own soul and the souls of the people; to whom be glory for ever! O that I might now spend and be spent in the service of souls, and of my blessed Redeemer! I long to see the dawning of the latter day. May the Lord hasten it in His time! Amen.

July 16th.—Having arrived in London in order to attend the Conference, I consulted that pious and eminent physician, Dr. John Whitehead, on the infirmities under which I laboured in my breast. He advises me to give up morning preaching at five o'clock, and to preach but little in the evenings. But my honoured and much-esteemed friend, Mr. Fletcher, gives me advice of another kind; namely, to follow his example, and look out for a suitable

companion to nurse me in the retreat, and under the infirmities, of life. That, however, must be a subject of prayer.

August 5th.—To-day I set out a second time for the Bradford Circuit. O that the presence of God might accompany me in His word and work among that people! On arriving safe, I can say that the Lord has accompanied me. He gave me great power and success at several places where I preached, and souls were brought to God.

23d.—By the advice of physicians I am again obliged to leave my Circuit, and go to the sea; the salt water being beneficial to a scorbutic complaint with which I am afflicted. I spent a fortnight at Bridlington, and at the Quay. At both these places I preached several times; and it may be that the bread cast on the waters shall be found after many days.

September 9th.—My dear friend, Mr. Coulson, of Scarborough, met me to-day at Wold-Newton, and took me to his house, where I continued almost every night to be engaged in preaching or exhortation: and God was pleased to own my poor labours; to whom be glory for ever! On the 15th I preached a funeral sermon on the death of Captain James Smith, a young man not quite twenty-one. I think I never saw so neat, attentive, and serious a congregation before. They were almost all in tears; and the young people, in particular, were deeply affected. It was indeed a very solemn occasion.

October 1st.—This day I arrived safe at Bradford, having been accompanied part of the way by my dear friend, Mr. Coulson; and preached at Malton, York, &c., on my return. I find my health much

improved, and hope to devote my new acquisition of strength wholly to the glory of God.

In opening the new chapel at Wichfield, half-way between Bradford and Halifax, we had a very serious alarm by the breaking of an old bench. It was some time before the noise and terror subsided. As not half the crowd could get in, I took occasion to preach out of doors; and was happy to remark, that the whole could hear the word, and the Divine blessing implored on the assembled multitude.

At the close of this year I can give but a summary of my labours in the Lord. They have been much the same as in the Birstal Circuit, only my declining state of health did not allow me to hold many watch-nights. I have therefore bowed to the Divine restraints, and held frequent prayer-meetings after preaching, and been favoured with the power of the Holy Ghost. In these exercises, many souls have been converted during the last two years, and several hundreds added to the different societies. The thorn in the flesh has checked the ardours of my mind. The sharp returns of pain in my breast and head, accompanied with dizziness in the pulpit, have often obliged me to hold myself by the desk, to keep me from falling down. Sometimes, indeed, I must have declined the work altogether, had not the rides in this Circuit been short, and had I not been favoured with many vacant nights.

[In addition to what Mr. Valton states here, I have to add, that in lovefeasts, and on other occasions, he held fast the confidence of the pure and perfect love of God. He pressed this liberty more or less in most of his sermons, in the society meetings, and in visiting the classes. In discipline, he

was a pattern of paternal vigilance and care. He would not allow the men to commit any nuisance near the house of God, nor allow any member to lend a ticket to other persons to enable them to obtain admission into the lovefeasts; as this was silently telling the stewards at the door a double lie,—“This is my name; I am in the society.” A man from the country had bought a cake for his child on the Sabbath-day: the circumstance having reached Mr. Valton’s ears, in renewing the tickets, he required him to promise not to do it again; which not being complied with, he tore the ticket. To rich men who prospered in trade, and conformed to the world, his voice was often strong: he menaced them with the loss of their souls. I once saw an opulent friend come out of the chapel, very much moved by what he had just heard. Mr. V., however, got well over those difficulties, because the offended soon knew that he practised the duties of charity which he pressed upon others.]

July 19th.—Having taken my leave of the dear people in my Circuit on the 3d of this month, I proceeded, by easy rides, to the Bristol Conference, preaching almost every night among my old friends. On some occasions, the Lord favoured me with remarkable enlargement, both in prayer and in preaching.

August 1st.—This day our Conference closed; and, by an overruling Providence, I was appointed assistant (we now say superintendent) of the Bristol Circuit; and yet with the grace to be a supernumerary, which indulgently allowed me to preach just as much as I was able.

[Mr. Valton, when in the Bristol Circuit, eight

years before, had found the kindest of Christian friends in Mr. and Mrs. Purnel, who lived at the Fort. They had also a country house at Almondsbury, seven miles north of Bristol. Mr. Purnel was now dead, and the family had, in consequence of considerable losses in mercantile life, laid aside their carriage. The widow now lived entirely at Almondsbury, with a view to foster the infant cause in that parish. She, and Miss Johnson, and Mrs. Wait, of Belton, were reckoned three of the most pious women among the Methodists in the west of England. Of the connexion that follows, Mr. Valton writes :—]

It was now that a correspondence was begun between me and Mrs. Purnel; in which procedure I met with the concurrence of Messrs. John and Charles Wesley. Mr. Charles, then living in Bristol, cordially approved, as did also the particular circle of our religious friends. After receiving the approbation of Mr. Wesley and a few select friends, I wrote to her, proposing marriage, and retired to Brean, a very lonely place, within a hundred yards of the sea. Here I gave myself up anew to the Lord, and cannot but adore and praise my Lord who directed me to so retired a place. I know not where I could have found so agreeable a situation for health and solitude. Here I was much engaged in prayer, and my God was with me. I deprecated all the sins of my single life, and cried to God to interpose with regard to the issues of my letter. I particularly implored an increase of His Holy Spirit, and that I might return to the labours of the Circuit with strength renewed. Many weeping and happy times I had; and, I believe, my soul sunk into a

deeper state of pure and humble love than I had enjoyed for some years past. The day on which I left Brean, while walking on the sea-shore, I entered into a most solemn covenant with the Lord. I repeatedly, and with my whole heart, avouched the Lord to be my God, and my portion for ever. I found myself perfectly free from all creatures, sensible that all my riches, honours, and blessedness must come from Him. My soul did indeed rejoice in the God of my salvation; whose name be blessed for ever!

September 30th.—This day Mrs. P. gave her full consent to marry me. On this subject we have both had severe trials; but a kind Providence seems to have cleared our way.

[Mr. Valton, ever mindful of his paternal cares over me in the work, favoured me with a very encouraging letter; which I transcribe for the good of others.

“BRISTOL, *November 2d*, 1786.

“DEAR JOSEPH,

“I WAS comforted when I received your letter; and am overjoyed that the Lord blesses you with success in your work. This you may consider as a token of the Divine approbation, and that you are now where Providence has appointed.

“My dear Joseph, take no thought for the morrow: live and labour to-day, and God will bless you. As your day may be, so shall be your strength. He will not send you a warfare at your own charge. He will help and uphold you, and make you like a new threshing instrument. In all your troubles, have respect unto the recompense of reward; and for

the joy that is set before you, endure the pain and shame of the cross. Remember, afflictions are but for a moment; but the rewards are a weight of glory.

“You must not be discouraged at the loss of seventy members the first quarter-day. I have generally found a loss after Conference, which the Lord makes up in the course of the year.

“And now, my dear youth, let me entreat you to give yourself wholly up to God, and to prayer. Do not seek so much for the art, as for the unction, of preaching. If you have the art, you will please: if you have the unction, you will save men. Cry to God, my brother, that you may be filled with the Holy Ghost; and that the Spirit may accompany all your studies. You well know the method that I use, and how God has owned my labours. Was my success obtained by seeking to gain admiration? No. You know how familiar and plain my discourses were; and how much prayer I used for the help of the Lord’s arm. Beware that you do not give yourself up to such studies as may only enable you to decorate your sermons, and inform your hearers that you are not one of those ‘weak things’ that God has chosen to confound the wisdom of the wise. O Joseph, be simple and humble; and both God and man will love and honour you. Never aim to appear the gentleman, but the Christian. Be ready to clean your own shoes, and to do anything else for yourself and others that may be proper.

“Be not forgetful of the servants where you go; but speak to them, as well as their masters; for with God there is no respect of persons. Beware of high living, especially drinking much beer or wine.

Let your moderation be known to all men; and let all your hearers see that your kingdom is not of this world. Wear your own hair, and buy nothing that is ornamental. Let no man despise you.

“And now, my dear brother, you will be thankful to God for these lines, and take them in good part. God bless you, and make you illustrious as the sun! May you be a burning and shining light in your day and generation; and may you at last finish your course with joy! Pray for me, my dear boy. My heart salutes you. Give my love to dear Jonathan and Penny, [cousins,] also to Mr. Wrigley. Let me hear from you now and then; and believe me, now and ever, your affectionate brother and fellow-labourer,

“JOHN VALTON.”]

Wednesday, December 1st, 1786.—This memorable day I received the hand of Judith Purnel at the altar in St. James's church, Bristol. It was a solemn time, and God was present with us. The Lord gave me courage to behave as became the occasion. My grateful heart said, “Surely I have not been a petitioner in vain at the throne of grace.” Such a pious and suitable person, in all respects, I do not know where else I could have found. While I was able to keep a Circuit, I sought not for a wife; being determined to have full freedom in serving the church. But now, being disabled, I have sought and found a faithful companion for the retreat of life. Just before I went to church, I fell on my knees, and entreated the Lord for a blessing. I could appeal to Him that I made His will my law; and could then have given her up, had it been His

pleasure. These words were applied with power to my mind, "Go, and I will bless thee." Lord, be it so! My soul embraced the promise, "My presence shall go with thee." It is enough, enough, O my God! And now, I beseech Thee, O Lord, fulfil Thy gracious word; and let Thy presence attend us in all the walks of life! Keep us ever humble, loving, and simple, at Thy feet; and make us truly helpful to each other, that we may meet at last where pain and parting shall be no more!

July 2d, 1787.—I this day closed my year of labours in the Bristol Circuit. The superintendency did not obstruct my going to visit new places. I took in Thornbury, and several villages, forming classes in every place. In the city of Bristol also we had a clear increase of one hundred members; and between one and two hundred souls found peace with God. The people truly live in my heart; and I can rejoice to waste my life away in doing them service. I preached on the road at several places, and had remarkable times: several were convinced of sin, and some found peace with God. At two or three of the places persons were heard crying aloud for mercy. Glory for ever be ascribed to Thee, O Lord!

August 18th.—This day I reached home from the Manchester Conference. Mr. Wesley having been so kind as to ease me of the duties of superintending the Circuit, I shall be at liberty to comply with invitations from the country, and to visit the villages.

Some time in October, by desire of Mr. and Mrs. Goodfellow, I visited Ditchat, where the Lord much blessed the word to the hearers. Some, from that night, were awakened, and brought into the society.

I had promised, on my return, to visit Shepton-Mallet, and give them a sermon on the following Sabbath, in the evening. Having had a very disagreeable representation of the state of religion in that town, I felt my spirits low, and experienced much depression as I was riding thither. But a text was forcibly brought to my mind: (Isa. liv. 1, 2:) "Sing, O barren," &c. I thanked the Lord; and, finding the congregation large, ventured to read the words which had been given to me on the road. Many, I perceived, were affected, and wept bitterly under the word. I met the society; but the crowd stayed behind, and I thought more than once that we should have had a general cry. When I came down from the pulpit, I found many in great distress, and could not leave them without prayer. Mr. Coulson, an aged class-leader, told me afterwards, that he believed about one hundred persons were more or less awakened under that discourse.

In the beginning of November I spent two or three nights more with that people; and many seemed truly convinced, and in earnest for salvation. The mornings I spent at my lodgings, to receive and advise those who came in distress, inquiring what they must do to be saved. The congregations increased every night, and a general spirit of alarm and inquiry was spread through the town and neighbourhood. That week many found peace, and forty-four were admitted on trial into the society. How soon did the Lord fulfil the gracious words given me for a text, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear!" &c.

In my next visit I had another wonderful night, and returned thanks for about twenty-two that had lately found peace with God. The preachers

in the Circuit had fostered and encouraged the work. I may truly say, I never saw such a general awakening, and without the least appearance of wild fire. One morning, I think not less than twenty came to my chamber in distress, and two of them found peace with God. Among the many who were convinced and converted in this revival, was a very intelligent-looking boy, deaf and dumb, who stood up in the lovefeast, and by signs, which others interpreted, expressed how happy he was in God.

On the last day of this year, I preached again at Ditchet, to a crowded auditory; and God sent the word to the hearts of many. We continued the services till near midnight. Three that were near me were in great distress, especially a young man that was born without arms. He had been a notorious sinner, and was wonderful in the use of his teeth and feet. This youth roared aloud for the disquietude of his soul.

In one of my former visits to Ditchet, a woman, who had been awakened, desired her husband to come and hear me. "No," said he, "I would rather go to hell than hear the Methodists." He was presently after seized with a pain in his side, took to his bed, and died in a few days. One of our friends visited him, and proposed prayer. "No," said he, "it is too late. You should have come before." In a little while he was heard to exclaim, "What, is it for ever! for ever!" and presently died.

July 13th, 1788.—This day I set out for the London Conference, having finished my second year at Bristol; my first care being to thank the Lord for the success with which He has favoured me in the past year. About one hundred members have been

added in Shepton-Mallet, and the chapel has been considerably enlarged.

[About this time, the case of George Lukins attracted considerable notice in Bristol, and in all the public papers. I personally knew him; a youth about eighteen, short in stature, and meagre in aspect. He had frequent fits or paroxysms, and was sometimes affected like the Pythonesses, or rather like the Furies, mentioned often by Herodotus and ancient writers. He was cruelly distorted, and uttered foul language; but was often heard to say, that he should be delivered, if seven ministers should pray with him. His words, at length, attracted notice, and the Rev. Mr. Easterbrook, Vicar of Temple church, collected that number to pray with Lukins in the vestry, and see what the Lord would do. They were gentlemen of superior education, and able ministers. Suffice to say, after the prayers of that morning, Lukins had no more of those horrid distortions, but was employed by Mr. R. Edwards, and others, as a bill-sticker. Mr. Easterbrook published a plain narrative of the case, an extract of which was published by Mr. Wesley in his Magazine. A physician of Bristol replied to Mr. Easterbrook, contending that Lukins was altogether an impostor. The Rev. Thomas M'Geary, A.M., principal of the Kingswood School, and one of the seven, was, as he himself told me, very much of the physician's mind; but, knowing Lukins to be altogether illiterate, he asked him a question in Latin, and Lukins at once replied in Latin. This carried conviction to the minds of all the gentlemen, that the contortions of the young man were effectuated by an evil influence; and, by consequence,

that Lukins was a demoniac. Of this Mr. Valton writes :—]

Some time ago I had a letter requesting me to make one of the seven ministers to pray over George Lukins. I cried out before God, "Lord, I am not fit for such a work ; I have not faith to encounter a demoniac." It was powerfully applied, "Go in this thy might." The day before we were to meet, I went to see Lukins, and found such faith, that I could then encounter the seven devils which he said tormented him. I did not doubt but deliverance would come. Suffice to say, when we met, the Lord heard prayer, and delivered the poor man.

April 22d.—At Lady-day I was providentially removed from Almondsbury to a house adjacent to St. George's church, at Kingswood ; a central abode to a little sphere of labour. Here we fitted up the best part of the house for a chapel ; a beautiful large room, comfortable and commodious. We have preaching every Tuesday, and Mrs. Valton meets a class : thus, through mercy, good has already been done. I would gladly infer, that it is the earnest of a much greater work. My chief infirmities during the year have been a vertigo in my head, and an old infirmity in my ankle. If I walk much, it sometimes deprives me of sleep at night. Glory be to God that He does not quite lay me aside !

July 6th, 1789.—I this day set out for the Leeds Conference. My bodily infirmities still continue, especially in my ankle ; so that now I can walk but little. Sometimes the loss of memory in the pulpit has obliged me to stop, and I have been ready to fall down. Under all my weaknesses, the Lord

still blesses my word in the conviction and conversion of souls.

My Methodistical year having closed, I would wish, like the cautious tradesman, to take stock, and see whether I have been a gainer or a loser in the past year. I trust, in the fear of God, I can say, that I have been, in some small degree, a gainer. I have reason to believe that love to my God has increased. Some humbling trials have exercised my patience, and proved it to be more than it was. I feel more indifferent to the praise or dispraise of men, and seem to be more loose than ever to the world. I feel the same love to souls, and desire to lay out my life to do them good, and advance the Redeemer's kingdom. I have no desire, no notion, of living for anything but to serve the church. Thus, through grace, I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me. To see the vineyard of the Lord flourish, and the vines send forth their tender grapes, is the joy and delight of my heart. I have no greater joy than to see the children of Zion walk in the truth. I can indeed say,

"Zion,—my first, my latest care,
The burden of my dying prayer,—
Shall live within my heart."

August 5th.—This day our Conference ended at Leeds. We had a very brotherly and affectionate Conference, and seemed perfectly united one to another. I still remained a supernumerary, being unable to resume the labours of a Circuit.

While at Leeds I consulted the good Dr. James Hamilton [who afterwards removed to practise in London] on my infirmities. He, as others, advised me to go to Scarborough. I did so, and was com-

fortably entertained at my old friend's, Mr Coulson's; whom I now found actively engaged for God as a leader and Circuit-steward. I received benefit from bathing, and drinking the water; and preached in the town and villages; but think the people were not so lively as before.

September 16th.—I this day arrived safe at home, and felt much thankfulness to God. On my journey, I was much assisted while preaching at York, Leeds, and other places. To God be praise and glory for ever! Amen.

On making my estimate towards the close of the year, I feel grateful that the Lord does not take His word from my lips. Though I cannot take a Circuit, through infirmities, yet, in general, I am enabled to preach about twenty times in a month: often indeed, with much pain and difficulty. I bless the Lord, that my heart is still in the work; I cannot forget the former days; and, if it were in my power, I would again go forth into the full work of saving souls. But known unto my God are the painful nights that I frequently have, as well as wearisome days. But all is for good. The Lord cannot err; nor can I choose. Glory be to His name for ever!

MR. VALTON's Journal ends here. He did not write much in later years; and the greater part of what he wrote relates to places, and the texts on which he preached.

May 11th, 1790.—He opened the new chapel at Trowbridge, while I took his place in Bristol. On my return, I found the most grateful sentiments, that so blessed a man had been sent amongst them.

In the chamber, at Mr. Knapp's, where the preachers lodged, was a Bible placed for their use. On the blank leaf, between the Old and the New Testament, I found in Mr. Valton's own hand three texts:—

“Cursed be the man that doeth the work of the Lord negligently.” (Jeremiah xlvi. 10.)

“Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest My soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate.” (Jeremiah vi. 8.)

“My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” (Genesis vi. 3.)

At the Bristol Conference, 1790, Mr. Richard Andrews, of Redruth, having come on some Cornish affairs, Mr. Valton was requested, as indeed he had often been desired before, to spend a little time among the generous-hearted people of that county. The visit was very refreshing both to them and to him. The ground was new, and it seemed as if he could hardly leave it. Of this extended visit he wrote to Miss Knapp, of Worcester, as follows:—

“KINGSWOOD, *October 28th*, 1790.

“MY DEAR MISS KNAPP,

“THIS day I arrived at home, after being absent above eleven weeks in Cornwall. I was desired by Mr. Wesley, and the friends at the last Conference, to visit the Cornwall Circuits, which I have now done; and, I trust, with some profit to myself and others.

“I did not receive your letter till this afternoon, or I should most gratefully have acknowledged your favour before this time. I am exceedingly obliged to you, and your dear father, for taking so much thought about such an unworthy creature. It pains me that I cannot comply with your kind proposals [to come and reside among them]. We have in the

Bristol Circuit a greater prospect of good than ever ; so that I dare not move from this place. I can do nothing without the Lord. The cloudy pillar must move before me. Pray give my sincerest love to the friends at Stoke ; and say, that it would afford me great satisfaction to have them for neighbours, but Providence has ordered it otherwise.

"And now, O Sukey, what a vain thing is life, without the enjoyment of God and of real religion ! Can anything here below supply the wants, and fill the vast desires, of an immortal spirit ? O, no ! See then that you desire, and seek, and labour for that precious pearl,—the love of God. All short of this leaves the soul under the anathema of a righteous God. The love of God is the life of the soul, the kernel of all true religion. Possessed of this, you may smile amid the wreck of nature and the crash of worlds. Do not rest short of this love. Preaching is good ; class-meeting is good, and so are all the means of grace ; but if we do not attain to love, through faith in the atoning blood, we shall never be admitted into the presence of God. My dear Sukey, have you justifying faith ? Have you peace with God ? Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart ? If not, O that you may now set out afresh, and never rest till you can say, ' Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee ! ' May God bless and keep you from the snare of the fowler ! May He adorn your soul with every grace of His Holy Spirit, and give you a place at last among the honourable women !

"I am, dear Miss Knapp,
"Your most obliged and affectionate friend,
"JOHN VALTON."

This holy and venerable man, suffering under many infirmities, felt no decay of love and zeal. We find him making excursions for twelve or fourteen miles from home, to Bath, Paulton, Clutton, Pensford, &c. To Nailsea he often went. The Rev. Mr. Baddily and he were very intimate. This clergyman received the preachers, and attended the Bristol Conference. He and Dr. Coke gave us the sacrament at the close of the Conference, in 1790; Mr. Wesley, being fatigued, received the elements as the officiating ministers trod among the crowd. In the latter end of the next year, we find Mr. Valton paying his annual visit to his Gloucester and Worcester friends, as he writes to Mr. Knapp, of Worcester. This letter, as a cloud of others, is a specimen of his faithful dealing with his best friends :—

“September 21st, 1791.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I INTEND, if the Lord permit, on the 29th instant, to occupy your bed-chamber. Give my love to the preacher in town, and, if it be agreeable, I will endeavour to preach that night. I hope also to be at Bewdley and at Tewkesbury.

“My dear friend, you are growing rich : do you also grow good? Beware that you be not surfeited with the cares of this world. Your life waxes old as doth a garment, and very soon all before you will be eternity. Beware, lest that day come upon you unawares. Christ says, ‘I come as a thief.’ O that you and I may be found ready! Look to it, my dear John, that you be pursuing after holiness. If we are found at death in a lukewarm state, the Redeemer will spue us out of His mouth. The

Lord stir us up to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Then, when Christ shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory.

“I am

“Your truly affectionate brother,

“JOHN VALTON.”

The next year he paid another visit to his numerous friends in Worcestershire, &c., &c. His letter, on his return, to the same friend, breathes the same spirit:—

“KINGSWOOD; *October 3d*, 1792.

“MY DEAR BROTHER KNAPP,

“THROUGH the kind mercy of God, I arrived safe at home yesterday, and found my family in health and peace; for which I desire to be unfeignedly thankful. It was a pleasure that Miss Knapp came to us in the evening, accompanied by our two nieces. May the Lord bless her coming to the profit of her soul!

“I found myself very comfortable while I was at Worcester: the appearance of good days rejoiced my heart. I believe you will see both an increase of the work, and an increase of grace in the people. And may I not hope that my dear brother will come in for his share? You are deeply immersed in worldly avocations and cares, and have need to pray, and to fear lest you should be overcharged with them, and the day of the Lord come upon you unawares. Your care for the temporal interests of your family is highly commendable; only there is danger lest it should absorb the needful care of your soul. I would recommend you to lessen those cares as much and as soon as you can, that you may attend the more to your spiritual interests.

"O my dear brother, you are now very far advanced on your journey; and eternity is suspended on a very few uncertain moments of time. You are clearly convinced, that without holiness you cannot see the Lord. Let it then be your chief care to secure an inheritance among all those that are sanctified; yea, as far as possible, recommend it, and promote it in your family. Call them together every morning and evening, for reading and prayer. The eyes of men are on you, and your children, and your servants. In so doing, you may leave a lasting impression on their minds, which may do them good in future years. And the God of peace and love bless both you and them with present and everlasting mercies!

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN VALTON."

About this time a strong feeling was revived in the nation in favour of the West India slaves; and the religious world began to express their sentiments by abstaining from the use of sugar and rum. Mr. Valton, as was most likely, joined in this feeling, and in a pamphlet recommended abstinence from those articles.

While I was stationed in the west of England, I called two or three times to see him, and generally found him in apparent health and good spirits. He had learned to bear the thorn in the flesh with silent meekness. The last time I called was, perhaps, eight months before he died. Mrs. Valton now told me what I had no idea of before, that he sometimes lay for whole nights sleepless, and sweating with anguish and pain, from a carious ankle. When he came into

the parlour, he looked only a little impaired in his face, but was still able to preach. He seemed to regret a want of resolution to suffer amputation. The pains, meanwhile, superinduced a fever, which gradually consumed a good constitution. So silent and secret were his sufferings, that I did not hear of immediate danger till I heard of his death.

His dear wife, running a race, as it were, to the tomb with her husband, died a happy death on the 16th of November, 1793. No notes were taken of his last moments, except general testimonies of his faith and love, patience and resignation. From brother Viner, steward of the Portland chapel in Bristol, I gained the most satisfactory intelligence. Hearing that his exit was near, he went over to see him, and saw a glorious sight,—a dying worm as happy as grace could make him on earth. “Brother,” said he, “my soul for the last four days has been in a state of inward glory.” It was the river of life which watered his spirit with a constant stream of glory, peace, and joy. So John Valton, of blessed memory in the church, fell asleep in the Lord, on the 23d of March, 1794. At his death and funeral, all men seemed to feel but one sentiment, and to utter one wish,—to die as Mr. Valton died.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. GEORGE SHADFORD.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at Scotter, near Kirton in Lindsey, Lincolnshire, January 19th, 1739. When I was very young I was uncommonly afraid of death. At about eight or nine years of age, being very ill of a sore throat, and likely to die, I was awfully afraid of another world; for I felt my heart very wicked, and my conscience smote me for many things that I had done amiss.

As I grew up I was very prone to speak bad words, and often to perform wicked actions. We lived by a river side, where a part of my cruel sport was to hurt or kill the poor innocent fowls. One day, seeing a large flock of ducks sitting close together, I threw a stick with great violence, killed one of them upon the spot, and was highly diverted at seeing it die, till I saw the owner of it come out of his house, and threaten me severely. I was then sorely troubled, and knew not where to run. I knew I had sinned, and was greatly afraid lest it should come to my father's knowledge; therefore I durst not go home for a long time.

I was very prone to break the Sabbath, and, being fond of play, took every opportunity on Sunday to steal away from my father. In the forenoon, indeed, he always made me go to church with him; and when dinner was over, he made me and my sister read a chapter or two in the Bible, and charged me not to play in the afternoon; but notwithstanding all he said, if any person came in to talk with him, I took that opportunity to steal away, and he saw me not till evening, when he called me to an account.

I wished many times that the Rev. Mr. Smith, the minister of the parish, was dead, because he hindered our sports on the Lord's day. On Sunday, finding me and several others at football, he pursued me near a quarter of a mile. I ran until I was just ready to fall down; but coming to a bank, over which I tumbled, I escaped his hands for that time. My conscience always troubled me for these sins; but having a flow of animal spirits, and being tempted of the devil, and drawn by my companions and evil desires, I was always carried captive by them.

My mother insisted on my saying my prayers every night and morning, at least; and sent me to be catechised by the minister every Sunday. At fourteen years of age my parents sent me to the bishop to be confirmed; and at sixteen they desired me to prepare to receive the blessed sacrament. For about a month before it, I retired from all vain company, prayed, and read alone; whilst the Spirit of God set home what I read to my heart. I wept much in secret, was ashamed of my past life, and thought I would never spend my time on Sundays as I had done. When I approached the table of the Lord, it appeared so awful to me, that I was likely

to fall down, as if I was going to the judgment-seat of Christ. However, very soon my heart was melted down like wax before the fire. These good impressions continued about three months. For I often thought, "If I sin any more, I shall have eaten and drunk my own damnation, not discerning the Lord's body."

I broke off from all my companions, and retired to read on the Lord's day; sometimes into my chamber, at other times into the field; but very frequently into the churchyard, near which my father lived. I have spent among the graves two or three hours at a time, sometimes reading, and sometimes praying, until my mind seemed transported in tasting the powers of the world to come. So that I verily believe, had I been acquainted with the Methodists at that time, I should have soon found remission of sins, and peace with God. But I had not a single companion that feared God; all were light and trifling. Nay, I believe at that time the whole town was covered with darkness, and sat in the shadow of death.

Having none to guide or direct me, the devil soon persuaded me to take more liberty; and suggested that I had repented and reformed enough; that there was no need to be always so precise; that there were no young people in the town who did as I did; and that I might take a walk amongst them on Sundays in the afternoon without being wicked. I gave way to this fatal device of Satan, and, by little and little, lost all my good desires and resolutions, and soon became weak as in times past.

After this I became intimate with two young men that lived about a mile off, who were very often reading books that were entertaining to youth of a

carnal mind ; such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and his *Art of Love*, &c. ; which soon had a tendency to corrupt and debauch my mind. Now religious books became tasteless and insipid to me ; my corruptions grew stronger and stronger, and, the blessed Spirit being grieved, my propensity to sin increased more than ever.

I was fond of wrestling, running, leaping, football, dancing, and such like sports ; and I gloried in them, because I could excel most in the town and parish. At the age of twenty I was so active, that I seemed a compound of life and fire ; and had such a flow of animal spirits, that I was never in my element, but when employed in such kind of sports.

About this time the Militia Act took place, and I thought I would learn the manual exercise ; and, as we had no expectation of marching from home, it would be pretty employment for me at Easter or Whitsuntide. Four persons were allotted to serve in the militia at the place of my nativity. One of them, a young man, was much afraid to go. I asked him what he would give me to take his place. He thought at first I was only in jest ; but when he saw I was in earnest, he gave all I asked, which was seven guineas. When my parents heard I was enlisted, they were almost distracted, especially my father. I was greatly afflicted in my mind, when I saw my parents in such trouble on my account. At their desire, therefore, I went back to undo what I had done ; but to no purpose : so at the time appointed I was sworn in.

At the end of the year the militia was called off to Manchester, where we lay most of the winter. While we lay here I was taken ill of a fever, and found myself horribly afraid of death ; but when I

recovered, my distress soon wore off again. One night, about nine o'clock, just as I was going to bed, I heard the drums beat to arms! We soon understood that an express was come to town for our company to march immediately to Liverpool; and that Thurot had landed at Carrickfergus, in Ireland. We were under arms immediately, marched all night, and arrived at Warrington about break of day, and at Liverpool the next evening.

My chief concern now was, for fear (if we should have an engagement) that my life and soul should be lost together; for I knew very well I was not prepared for death. The next summer we were quartered at Chester and Knutsford; and the winter following we lay at Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. This year I was often very miserable and unhappy. I well remember one day, when being exceedingly provoked by one of my comrades, I swore at him two bitter oaths by the name of God; a practice I had not been guilty of. Immediately I was, as it were, stabbed to the heart by a sword. I was sensible I had grievously sinned against God, and stopped directly. I believe I never swore another oath afterward.

I was often tempted this year to put an end to my life; for it was a year of sinning, and a year of misery. I was afraid to stand by a deep river, lest I should throw myself in. If I was on the edge of a great rock, I trembled, and thought I must cast myself down, and therefore was obliged to retreat suddenly. When I have been in the front gallery at church, I have many times been forced to withdraw backward, being horribly tempted to cast myself down headlong. It seemed as if Satan was permitted to wreak his malice upon me in an

uncommon manner, to make me miserable ; but, glory be to God, I was wonderfully preserved by an invisible hand, in the midst of such dreadful temptations. At other times, when at prayer, or walking alone meditating, God hath graciously given me to taste of the powers of the world to come.

I always had a strong natural affection for my parents, and would do anything that was in my power for them. It happened, a little before I went from home in the militia, that my father was in some distress in temporal circumstances. This moved me much : I therefore gave him all the money I had received in order to go into the militia. Very frequently, during my absence from them, when the minister read over the fifth commandment in the church, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land," &c., with tears in my eyes I have said, "Lord, incline my heart to keep this law ;" always believing a curse would attend disobedient, undutiful children.

When our company lay in quarters at Gainsborough, I went with a sergeant to the place where the Methodists frequently preached, which was the old hall belonging to Sir Nevil Hickman. We did not go with a design of getting any good for our souls ; but to meet two young women, (who sometimes frequented that place at one o'clock,) in order to walk with them in the afternoon. When we came there, we found the persons we wanted ; but I soon forgot them after the preacher began public worship. I was much struck with his manner. He took out his hymn-book, and the people sang a hymn. After this he began to pray extempore, in such a manner as I had never heard or been used to before. I thought it to be a most excellent

prayer. After this he took his little Bible out of his pocket, read over his text, and put it into his pocket again. I marvelled at this, and thought within myself, "Will he preach without a book too?"

He began immediately to open the Scriptures; and compared spiritual things with spiritual, in such a light as I had never heard before. I did not suppose he had very learned abilities, or that he had studied either at Oxford or Cambridge; but something struck me, "This is the gift of God; this is the gift of God." I thought it was the Lord's doing, and marvellous in my eyes.

The preacher spoke much against drunkenness, swearing, &c.; but I thought I was not much guilty of such sins. At last he spoke very closely against pleasure-takers, and proved that such were dead while they live. I thought, "If what he says be true, I am in a most dreadful condition." I thought again, "This must be true; for he proves it from the word of God." Immediately I found a kind of judgment-seat set up in my conscience, where I was tried, cast, and condemned; for I knew I had been seeking happiness in the pleasures of the world and in the creature all my days, not in the Creator and Redeemer of my soul, the only central point of bliss. I revolved over and over what I had heard, as I went from the preaching; and resolved, "If this be Methodist preaching, I will come again;" for I received more light from that single sermon, than from all that ever I heard in my life before.

I thought no more about the girls whom I went to meet; and found I had work enough to take care of my own soul. I now went every Sunday

when there was preaching, at half-past one, to the same place; and continued so to do most of the time we lay at Gainsborough. It was not long before my comrades and acquaintance took notice of my religious turn of mind, and began to ridicule me. I was surprised at this; for I (ignorantly) thought, "If I become serious, every one will love and admire." I still continued to go to the preaching, till the soldiers and others having repeatedly reproached and laughed at me, I began to think I had not sufficient strength to travel to heaven, as I was connected with such a set of sinners.

I then made a vow to Almighty God, that if He would spare me until that time twelvemonth, (at which time I should be at liberty from the militia, and intended to return home,) I would then serve Him. So I resolved to venture another year in the old way, damned or saved. O, what a mercy that I am not in hell! that God did not take me at my word, and cut me off immediately! From this time the Spirit of God was grieved; and consequently I was left to fall into sin as bad or worse than ever.

After this we marched, and were quartered near Dartford, in Kent, where we continued eleven weeks. This place seemed to me the most profane for swearing, cursing, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, &c., that ever I saw in any part of England. I was so affected, that I went to the minister of the parish, and let him know what wretched work of drinking and fighting we had in the taverns in service-time on Sunday; and desired him to see to it. He did so, and strictly forbid any liquor to be sold during church-service for the future. It was at this place

the Lord arrested me again with strong convictions ; so that I was obliged to leave my comrades at noon-day, and ran up into my chamber, where I threw myself upon my knees, and wept bitterly. I thought, "Sin, cursed sin, will be my ruin." I was ready to tear the very hair from my head, thinking I must perish at last, and that my sins would sink me lower than the grave.

While I was in this agony in my chamber about noon, the landlady came into it, as she was passing into her own, and found me upon my knees. I was not in the least ashamed. She said nothing to me then ; but at night took me to task, and asked me if I was a Wesleyan, or Whitefieldite. I said, "Madam, what do you mean ? Do you reproach me because I pray, because I pray ?" She paused. I said again, "Madam, do you never pray to God ? I think I never saw you at church, or any other place of worship, these ten weeks I have been at your house." She answered, "No, the parson and I have quarrelled, and therefore I do not choose to go to hear him." I replied, "A poor excuse, madam ! And will you also quarrel with God ?" Wherever I travelled, I found the Methodists were everywhere spoken against by wicked and ungodly persons of every denomination ; and the more I looked into the Bible, I was convinced that they were the people of God.

Our next route was to Dover, where we tarried a month. Here the soldiers laughed me out of the little form of prayer I had ; for I used always to kneel down by the bed side before I got into it. This form I dropped, and only said my prayers in bed. Our next remove was to Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, where we abode the winter ; and in spring went to Epworth, in which place I was discharged.

Soon after my arrival at home, several young persons seemed extremely glad to see me, and proposed a dance, to express their joy at our first meeting. Though I was not fond of this, yet, to oblige them, I complied, much against my conscience. We danced until break of day; and as I was walking from the tavern to my father's house, (about a hundred yards,) a thought came to my mind, "What have I been doing this night? Serving the devil!" I considered what it had cost me; and, upon the whole, I thought, "The ways of the devil are more expensive than the ways of the Lord. It will cost a man more to damn his soul than to save it." I had not walked many steps farther before something spoke to my heart, "Remember thy promise." Immediately it came strongly into my mind, "It is now a year ago since that promise was made, 'If Thou wilt spare me until I get home, I will serve Thee.'" Then that passage of Solomon came to my mind, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that thou vowest." I thought, "I will. I will serve the devil no more." But then it was suggested to my mind, "Stay another year, until thou art married, and settled in the world, and then thou mayest be religious." That was directly followed with, "If I do, God will surely cut me off, and send my soul to hell, after so solemn a vow made." From that time I never danced more, but immediately began to seek happiness in God.

A circumstance happened which tended to fix me in this resolution. Before I went into the militia, I was somewhat engaged to a young woman that lived in Nottinghamshire; and when I was at Manchester I wrote to her, but received no answer, which much

surprised me. After I returned home, I went to see her, but found she was dead and buried. This shocked me very much. I desired a friend to show me the place where she was interred. When I came to it, and was musing, I turned my eye to the left hand, and saw a new stone with this inscription:—

“In bloom of youth into this town I came.
Reader, repent; thy lot may be the same.”

I felt as if something thrilled through me. I read and wept, and read and wept again. I looked at the stone, and understood it was a young woman aged twenty-one. Upon inquiry, I found she had made great preparations, in gay clothing, in order to have a good dance, as she called it, at the fair held here. She talked much of the pleasure she expected before the time came. At last it arrived, and as she was tripping over the room with her companions, until twelve o'clock at night, she was suddenly taken ill. And, behold, how unexpected! O, how unwelcome! death struck her. She was put immediately to bed, and never left it until brought to this spot to be buried. No one can conceive how I felt, while I was meditating on the death of these two young women. The one I had tenderly loved. The other, although a stranger to me, had lived about two miles from the place of my nativity. “Well,” thought I, “a little while ago, these were talking, walking, pieces of clay, like myself; but now they are gone to the house appointed for all living.” I wept, and turned my back; but I never forgot that call to the day of my conversion to God.

At this time both my parents were taken very ill, which was cause of great trouble to me; for I was much afraid they would die. One day while I was

greatly distressed about them, and knew not what to do, at last it came into my mind, "Go to prayer for them." I went upstairs, shut myself in, and, if ever I prayed in my life from my heart, I did it at this time. I remember in particular, that I prayed to the Lord to raise them up again, and spare them four or five years longer. This prayer He graciously condescended both to hear and answer; for the one lived about four, the other near five, years afterward, and were truly converted to God.

I have looked upon it as a kind providence that brought a Methodist farmer to the place of my nativity, while I was absent in the militia, who received the Methodist preachers, and had formed a little society just ready for me when I got home. I was now determined to seek happiness in God; and therefore went constantly to church and sacrament, and to hear the Methodist preachers, to pray, and read the Scriptures. I thought, "I will be good. I am determined to be good." But, alas! in about six or eight weeks, instead of being very good, I saw my heart was corrupt, and nothing but sin. I read at night different prayers. Sometimes I prayed for humility or meekness; at other times, for faith, patience, or chastity: whatever I thought I wanted most. I was thus employed, when the family were in bed, for hours together. And many times, whilst reading, the tears ran from my eyes, so that I could read no further; and when I found my heart softened, and could open it to Almighty God, there seemed a secret pleasure in repentance itself; with a hope springing up that God would save me, and bestow His pardoning mercy. While I was thus employed in seeking the Lord, and drawn by the Spirit of God, I esteemed it more than my necessary food.

A little after this, I went to see an uncle at East-Ferry ; and as we were reading the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, he asked me if the latter part of that chapter belonged to St. Paul in his converted state. I said, I could not tell. "But if it was St. Paul's converted state," I said, "it is exactly mine. 'For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.'"

I then began to flatter myself, saying, "Surely I am converted. I trust I am in a safe state." And it is well if hundreds do not rest here.

But the Lord did not suffer me to take convictions for conversion. After those pleasant drawings, I had sorrow and deep distress. My sins pressed me sore, and the hand of the Lord was very heavy upon me. Thus I continued until Sunday, May 5th, 1762: coming out of church, the farmer that received the preachers told me a stranger was to preach at his house. I went to hear him, and was pleased and much affected. He gave notice that he would preach again in the evening. In the meantime I persuaded as many neighbours as I could to go. We had a full house, and several were greatly affected while he published his crucified Master. Toward the latter part of the sermon I trembled; I shook; I wept. I thought, "I cannot stand it: I shall fall down amidst all this people." O, how gladly would I have been alone to weep! for I was tempted with shame.

I well remember he called out at last, and said, "Is there any young man here about my age willing to give up all and come to Christ? Let him come, and welcome; for all things are now ready." I

thought before this he was preaching to me; but now I was sure he spoke to me in particular. I stood guilty and condemned, like the publican in the temple. I cried out, (so that others might hear, being pierced to the heart with the sword of the Spirit,) "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No sooner had I expressed these words, but by the eye of faith (not with my bodily eyes) I saw Christ, my Advocate, at the right hand of God, making intercession for me. I believed He loved me, and gave Himself for me. In an instant the Lord filled my soul with Divine love, as quick as lightning; so suddenly did the Lord, whom I sought, come to His temple. Immediately my eyes flowed with tears, and my heart with love. Tears of joy and sorrow ran mingled down my cheeks. O, what sweet distress was this! I seemed as if I could weep my life away in tears of love. I sat down in a chair; for I could stand no longer. And these words ran through my mind twenty times over: "Marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well." I knew not then that these words were in the Scripture, until I opened on them in the Psalms, when I got home.

As I walked home along the streets, I seemed to be in paradise. When I read my Bible, it seemed an entirely new book. When I meditated on God and Christ, angels or spirits; when I considered good or bad men, any or all the creatures which surrounded me on every side; everything appeared new, and stood in a new relation to me. I was in Christ a new creature; old things were done away, and all things become new. I lay down at night in peace with a thankful heart, because the Lord had redeemed me, and given me peace with God and all

mankind. I thought I never should be troubled with the sin that did most easily beset me; and said within myself, "The enemies I have seen this day, I shall see them no more for ever." I felt the truth of those words:—

"How happy are they
Who the Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasure above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

"On the wings of His love
I was carried above
All sin, and temptation, and pain;
I could not believe
I ever should grieve,
I ever should suffer again."

But no sooner had I peace within, than the devil and wicked men began to roar without, and pour forth floods of lies and scandal, in order to drown the young child. And no marvel; for the devil had lost one of the main pillars of his kingdom in that parish; and therefore he did not leave a stone unturned, that he might cast an odium upon the work of God in that place. But none of these things moved me; for I was happy, happy in my God; clothed with the sun, and the moon under my feet; raised up, and made to sit in heavenly, holy, happy places in Christ Jesus.

In a fortnight after I was joined in society. When I joined, there were twelve in the society, chiefly old people. This was a little trial to me at first: but I thought it my duty to cast in my lot amongst them; for I was certain the Methodists, under God, were the happy instruments of my salvation. Therefore I knew I could not better recommend the good cause

to others, than by joining them, and letting my light shine before men, that others might take knowledge I had been with Jesus. It is really marvellous, that all who are awakened have not resolution enough heartily to unite in fellowship with the people of God. It is very rare that such make any progress. The blessed Spirit is grieved, and they remain barren and unfruitful. Were they faithful in obeying the Spirit of God, in taking up their cross, and setting an example to others, they might bring much glory to God, as well as obtain great peace and happiness to their own souls.

My greatest concern now was for my relations. I had a father and mother, sister and brother, all strangers to God. My father was sixty years old, and my mother near it. I scarcely ever went to the throne of grace without bearing them before the Lord in earnest prayer, and found great encouragement so to do. One night I took courage to speak to them, in as humble a manner as I could, with respect to family prayer. I told them, I believed they had brought us up in the fear of God as far as they knew, but we never had any family prayer. I added, "If it is agreeable to you, I will endeavour to pray in the best manner I can." On their consenting, we went into another room. I had not spoken many words in prayer before they were both in tears. When we arose from prayer, we wept over one another; and what seemed to affect them most was, to be taught by their child, when they ought to have taught me.

I continued to pray for them every night and morning for half a year. My father at length began to be in deep distress. I have listened, and heard him in private crying for mercy, like David out of

the horrible pit and miry clay, "O Lord, deliver my soul!" I began to reprove, exhort, and warn others wherever I came. My father was sometimes afraid, if I reproved the customers who came to our shop, it would give offence, and we should lose all our business. Upon which I said, "Father, let us trust God for once with all our concerns, and let us do this in the way of our duty, from a right principle; and if He deceives us, we will never trust Him more; for none ever trusted the Lord that were confounded." In less than a twelvemonth, instead of losing, we had more business than ever we had before.

I began now to pray in all our meetings, private and public; and the Lord mercifully heard, to the conviction and conversion of several, who were savingly brought to God, before I regularly attempted to exhort or preach. I had then no notion of being a preacher. I only thought it my duty to do good, and all the good I could; to occupy or use my one talent, until my Lord should come. I believed that was the religion of Jesus Christ, who went about doing good, and worked while it was day. Indeed, the love of God constrained me to speak. I had such a view of the fallen, miserable state of lost, perishing sinners, that I thought if I could be an instrument of saving but one soul, it would be worth all my pains, even all my life long. Our society increased from twelve to forty members in a short time; for the Lord gave me several of my companions in sin to walk with me in the ways of holiness.

The first time I exhorted was in the society. The class-leader put a hymn-book into my hand, and desired me to give a word of exhortation. The moment he did this I was seized with trembling;

but instantly my soul was filled with the love and power of God. I believe the few simple words that I spoke were made a blessing, more or less, to every one there. An old man, one of the first converts in the town, advised me to give myself much to reading and prayer, for he believed God had some work for me to do. The preacher had appointed me to meet a class before this, which often proved both a cross and a blessing to my soul. I now exhorted my friends, neighbours, enemies, and whosoever fell in my way, to flee from the wrath which is to come.

One Sunday morning, as I was exhorting in the farmer's house, some word cut my father to the heart. He fell back into the chair by which he stood, and wept, and was much distressed. On the evening of the same day he said to me, "I know not what is the matter with me. I seem quite stupid and foolish; nay, I seem lost." I answered, "Then you will not be long before you are found. Father, you are not far from the kingdom of God. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost."

The next day, about twelve o'clock, I came into the room where he was sitting, with a Bible upon his knee. He was reading in the Psalms of David. I saw the tears running down his cheeks; yet there appeared a joy in his countenance. I said, "Pray, father, what now? What now? What is the matter?" He instantly answered, "I have found Christ; I have found Christ at last. Upwards of sixty years I have lived without Him in the world, in sin and ignorance. I have been all the day idle, and entered not into His vineyard till the eleventh hour. O, how merciful was He to spare me, and hire me at last! He hath set my soul at liberty. O, praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul;

and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" I left him rejoicing in God his Saviour, and retired to praise God for answering my prayers.

My mother was convinced, by hearing me and an old man converse about our souls together in private. She used to listen to our conversation, and the Lord showed her the state she was in. She had been a moral woman, and had the fear of God, so as to act conscientiously in what she did as far as she knew. But when she was thoroughly awakened, her convictions were very deep: so that many times, when I have been praying for her, she hath been like a person convulsed; at other times like a woman in labour, travailing through the pangs of the new birth. At last the Lord gave her an assurance of His pardoning love under the preaching of Mr. Samuel Meggitt.

About this time I went to see my sister, near Epworth, to inform her what the Lord had done for my soul. At first, when I conversed with her, she thought I was out of my mind; but at length hearkened to me. She told me a remarkable dream she had some time before, in which she had been warned to lay aside the vain practice of card-playing, which she had been fond of. After I had returned home, she began to revolve in her mind what I had said; and thought, "How can my brother have any view to deceive me? What interest can he have in so doing? Certainly my state is worse than I imagine. He sees my danger, and I do not. Besides, he seems to be another man; he does not look, or speak, or act as he used to do." She therefore could not rest until she came to my father's house; and before she returned, was thoroughly convinced she was a miserable sinner.

In a short time I visited her again, and asked her to go to hear Samuel Meggitt preach. She heard him with great satisfaction. Afterward there was a lovefeast, and she, being desirous to stay, at my request, was admitted. As the people were singing a hymn on Christ's coming to judgment, she looked up, and saw all the people singing with a smile upon their countenance. She thought, "If Christ was to come to judgment now, I shall go to hell, and they will all go to heaven." Instantly she sunk down as if she was dying, and lay some time before she was able to walk home. She continued praying and waiting upon God for about a fortnight; when one day going to the well to fetch water, (like the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well,) she found the God of Jacob open to her thirsty soul His love, as a well of water springing up within her unto everlasting life; and as she returned from the well, her soul magnified the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced in God her Saviour.

So merciful was the Lord to my family, that four of them were brought to God in less than a year. My mother lived a happy witness of the love and favour of God three years, and died in great peace. My father lived upwards of four years, happy in God his Saviour, and used to say, "Now I am a little child turned of four years old:" meaning (although near sixty-five) that he had never lived to any good purpose, or to the glory of God, before. About half a year before his death, the Lord circumcised his heart, so that I believe he loved God with all his heart, and received a constant abiding witness that the blood of Christ had cleansed him from all sin.

When he was taken ill, I was preaching in Yorkshire; and as I returned home, it was impressed upon

my mind that my father was sick or dying. When I came near home, I met two friends, one of whom told me, he believed my father lay a-dying. As soon as he saw me, he was much affected; for he longed to see me before he died. He said to me, "Son, I am glad to see thee; but I am going to leave thee; I am going to God; I am going to heaven." I said, "Father, are you sure of it?" "Yes," said he, "I am sure of it. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Upward of four years ago the Lord pardoned all my sins; and half a year ago He gave me that perfect love that casts out all fear. At present I feel a heaven within me. Surely this heaven below must lead to heaven above." When I perceived he was departing, I kneeled down by him, and with fervent prayer commended his soul to God; and I praise His holy name that he died in the full assurance of faith.

My sister lived a faithful witness of the love of Jesus sixteen years. She was remarkable for faith and prayer; and enjoyed the perfect love of God several years before her death. She had eight or nine children; had nothing of this world's goods to leave them; but left them a good example, and sent up prayers to heaven for them; and wished more to see grace in their hearts, than that she had thousands of gold and silver to leave them. She used to say to me, "Brother, I believe all my children will be saved." When I seemed to doubt it, she answered, "But I pray in faith; and whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive." Her eldest daughter died before her a little, aged twenty-one, in the triumph of faith. And it is remarkable, since her death, her children, as they grow up, one after another, are convinced of sin, brought to God, and join the society.

I had a relation, Alice Shadford, who continued in earnest prayer for my conversion for twenty years, as she told me ; and I believe that God heard and answered her prayers in my behalf. She was indeed a mother in Israel, lived a single life, and enjoyed the fear and love of God above fifty years. She died full of days, and full of grace, aged ninety-six years. I often think there is scarcely a person converted upon earth, but it is in answer to some pious person's prayer, whom the Lord hath stirred up to plead for them.

I had many doubts of my call to preach at first. I knew it was my duty to do good in the little way I began with. But the important work of going forth publicly to call sinners to repentance made me tremble. After a great struggle in my mind, at last I resolved to make the trial. The first place I went to from home was a little place called Wildsworth. I believe there were not any there that knew God at that time. On Saturday night I continued three or four hours, until past midnight, in fervent prayer, that the Lord might point out my way. On Sunday morning I set out to the little village alone ; only I believed the Friend of sinners was with me. As soon as I came near there, I gave notice of my errand ; and quickly we had near a house full of people. In the first prayer I was much assisted, and some present began to drop tears. Under the preaching several appeared cut to the heart ; and the Lord blessed His word to many. As soon as I had done, I gave notice that I would preach in the street at East-Ferry. Several attended me thither ; and when I had concluded, I went home perfectly satisfied that God had called me to the work.

But very soon I was sadly discouraged, seeing my

own ignorance, and feeling my weakness. I reasoned with myself and Satan, until I thought the Lord required impossibilities; that He gathered where He had not strewed. I would go to preach His word, but He had not given me a talent sufficient for the important work. "How happy," thought I, "are they in a private capacity, who have nothing to do but to be faithful in their little sphere, and have not the charge of the souls of others!" I gave way to this kind of reasoning for a month; till at times I made myself almost as miserable as a demon. Then the Lord laid His chastening rod upon me, and afflicted me for a season, and showed me the worth of poor souls perishing in the broad way to destruction. After this I was made willing to go wherever He pleased to send me. So that when I began again to speak for Him, His word was like the flaming sword, which turned every way, to every heart; for sinners trembled and fell before it, and were both convinced and converted to God. I was often amazed at the condescension of God, and His favour to me in all my weakness. I was like Gideon. I required token after token. As soon as the Lord made way, and opened a door in any place, I formed a society, and got the travelling preachers to take it under their care as soon as I could.

But by loud and long preaching, by walking more and farther than my strength could bear, by sitting up praying and reading many times until morning, I was soon worn down, and appeared to be in a swift decline. At last I fell into a severe fever that continued seven weeks; and I expected to die, as did most that saw me. I never had any affliction in which I enjoyed so much of the presence of God as

this. He was with me every moment night and day. I continually saw Him who is invisible, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. O, how did I desire to depart and to be with Christ! I had such views of my Father's house, the glory and happiness of that place, that I longed to be there. But one day as I was in bed, full of the love of God, I had a visionary sight of two prodigious fields, in which I saw thousands of living creatures praying and wrestling in different places, in little companies. It appeared to me that I must be employed in that work too, and must go to help them. Whilst I was considering what this could mean, I took up my Bible, and opened on these words in the Psalms, "Thou shalt not die, but live, and declare the work of the Lord." I now believed I should recover, but was not so resigned to live as to die. I compared myself to a ship tossed upon the tempestuous ocean, for weeks and months together in great danger; at last I get in sight of the wished-for haven; when suddenly a contrary wind drives me back to sea again. From this time I began gradually to recover.

After this I preached occasionally for part of two years in the Epworth Circuit; and was encouraged by my friends, and by seeing the work of God prosper. When Mr. Wesley came into that part of the country, he asked me if I was willing to give myself up wholly to the great work of saving souls from death. I replied that it was my desire so to do. Accordingly, at the Bristol Conference following, I was appointed to labour in the west of Cornwall for the year 1768. This was a good year to me. I often wondered how the people could bear with my weakness; but the Lord owned His poor servant, and gave me to see the fruit of my labours. I was

one day in great danger of losing my life, the first time I crossed Hale; but two men at a little distance suddenly called aloud, bidding me stop and come back. Had I gone a few yards further, myself and my horse must inevitably have been swallowed up in a quicksand. I felt thankful, and went on admiring and adoring the watchful providence of God, my gracious and almighty Deliverer.

I was much affected this year with a remarkable instance of the sudden death of a backslider, who lived between Truro and Redruth. He had known the love of God, and walked circumspectly in the light of His countenance for seven years, and was diligent in every means of grace. But he began to give way to lightness and a trifling spirit. After this he refused to meet his brethren in band, and seldom met in class, until at length he entirely gave up both. He came to preaching sometimes, but began to be very free with his carnal neighbours, and shy with the people of God; till at last he fell into his old besetting sin, drunkenness, which he had conquered for seven years. One Sabbath-day he went with some carnal men to an ale-house, or gin-shop, and continued there until they all got drunk. At last they resolved to go home, though it was dark. Two of them lay down in the road; but the backslider was determined to go home alone; and as there were pits along the road-side about fifteen or twenty fathoms deep, he dropped into one of them, and was crushed to death, leaving a wife and children in deep distress. Many were greatly affected at this alarming case, and some backsliders who were acquainted with him were stirred up to return to Him from whom they had revolted.

The next year I laboured in Kent with Mr. Jaco.

God gave me spiritual children here also: it was indeed a very trying year, but very profitable to my own soul.

In 1770 I was sent to Norwich, and appointed to be the assistant; which was a great exercise of my mind, and hath been so ever since. We had a revival in Norwich, where several were converted to God. I went to Lynn occasionally this year, and stayed a fortnight or three weeks at a time, where the Lord blessed my labours, so that I joined thirty in society, of whom sixteen or eighteen had experienced the goodness of God to their souls.

After staying two years at Norwich, I went to the Leeds Conference, where I first saw Captain Webb. When he warmly exhorted preachers to go to America, I felt my spirit stirred within me to go; more especially when I understood that many hundreds of precious souls were perishing through lack of knowledge, scattered up and down in various parts of the woods, and had none to warn them of their danger. When I considered that we had in England many men of grace and gifts far superior to mine, but few seemed to offer themselves willingly, I then saw my call the more clearly. Accordingly, Mr. Rankin and I offered ourselves to go the spring following; when I received a letter from Mr. Wesley, informing me that I was to embark with Captain Webb at Bristol.

When I arrived at Peel, where the ship lay, an awful dream I had six years before was brought to my mind. I thought in my sleep I received a letter from God, which I opened and read, the substance of which was as follows:—"You must go to preach the Gospel in a foreign land, unto a fallen people, a mixture of nations." I thought I was conveyed to

the place where the ship lay, in which I was to embark, in an instant. The wharf and ship appeared as plain to me as if I were awake. I replied, "Lord, I am willing to go in Thy name; but I am afraid a people of different nations and languages will not understand me." An answer to this was given: "Fear not; for I am with thee." I awoke, awfully impressed with the presence of God upon my mind, and was really full of Divine love; and a relish of it remained upon my spirit for many days. I could not tell what this meant, and revolved these things in my mind for a long time. But when I came to Peel, and saw the ship and wharf, then all came fresh to my mind. I said to brother Rankin, "This is the ship, the place, and the wharf, which I saw in my dream six years ago." All these things were a means of strengthening and confirming me that my way was of God.

We took leave of our native land, and set sail on Good-Friday; often singing in our passage these words,

"The watery deep I pass,
With Jesus in my view;"

and after a comfortable passage of eight weeks we arrived safe at Philadelphia, where we were kindly received by a hospitable and loving people. In a few days I crossed the river Delaware, and went to Trenton; and laboured in the Jerseys with success for a month, adding thirty-five to the society, many of whom were much comforted with the presence of the Lord.

In my tour through the Jerseys, coming to a place called Mount-Holly, I met John Brainerd, brother to the devoted pious David Brainerd, missionary to the Indians. He appeared to be a very humble,

serious man. He heard me preach twice in his preaching-house in that place, and asked me to go to an Indian town which lay twenty miles from thence, and said he would collect together all the Indians and white people he could from different parts. I fully purposed in my mind to go the first opportunity; but, being suddenly called to labour at New York, was prevented. We conversed about two hours very profitably, about his brother David, and the Indians he had the care of; about Methodism and inward religion. He heartily wished us good luck, and said he believed the Lord had sent us upon the continent to revive inward religion amongst them.

One day a friend took me to see a hermit in the woods. After some difficulty we found his hermitage, which was a little place like a hogstye, built of several pieces of wood, covered with bark of trees; and his bed consisted of dry leaves. There was a narrow beaten path, about twenty or thirty yards in length, by the side of it, where he frequently walked to meditate. If one offered him food, he would take it; but if money was offered him, he would be very angry. If anything was spoken to him which he did not like, he broke out into a violent passion. He had lived in this cell seven cold winters; and after all his prayers, counting his beads, and separating from the rest of mankind, still corrupt nature was all alive within him. Alas! alas! what will it avail us whether we are in England or Ireland, Scotland or America; whether we live amongst mankind, or retire into a hermitage; if we still carry with us our own hell, our corrupt evil tempers? The devil will only laugh at us, while we are strangers to true repentance, and living faith in the blood of the

Redeemer. It is this alone that can remove our guilt, purify the soul, and give us victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; and make us comfortable in our own souls, and useful to others. As no man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel, so neither doth God bestow upon us any talent to hide it in the earth, in a cave, or cell.

My next remove was to New York, where I spent four months with great satisfaction. I went thither with fear and trembling; and was much cast down from a sense of my unworthiness, and inability to preach the Gospel to a polite and sensible people. But the Lord, who hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are wise, and weak things to confound the things which are mighty, condescended to make use of His poor weak servant for the revival of religion at that city. I added fifty members in those four months; about twenty of whom found the pardoning love of God, and several backsliders were restored to their first love. A vehement desire was excited in the hearts of believers after all the mind of Christ, or the whole image of God. I left in New York two hundred and four members in society.

I had a very comfortable time for four or five months that I spent in Philadelphia with a loving, teachable people. The blessing of the Lord was with us of a truth, and many were really converted to God. There was a sweet loving spirit in this society; for nothing appeared amongst them but peace and brotherly love. They had kept prayer-meetings in different parts of the city for some time before I went to it, which had been a great means of begetting life amongst the people of God as well as others. I left in society, when I went

from this place, two hundred and twenty-four members.

A remarkable circumstance happened just as I was leaving Philadelphia. When I went to the inn where my horse was, and had just entered into the yard, I observed a man fixing his eyes upon me, and looking earnestly until he seemed ashamed, and blushed very much. At length he came up to me, and abruptly said, "Sir, I saw you in a dream last night. When I saw your back, as you came into the yard, I thought it was you; but now that I see your face, I am sure you are the person. I have been wandering up and down this morning until now seeking you." "Saw me in a dream," said I: "what do you mean?" "Sir," said he, "I did. I am sure I did. And yet I never saw you with my bodily eyes before. Yesterday in the afternoon I left this city, and went as far as Schuylkill river, intending to cross it; but began to be very uneasy, and could not go over it: I therefore returned to this place, and last night, in my sleep, saw you stand before me; when a person from another world bade me seek for you until I found you, and said you would tell me what I must do to be saved. He said also that one particular mark by which I might know you was, that you preached in the streets and lanes in the city." Having spoken this, he immediately asked, "Pray, sir, are not you a minister?" (By which name they frequently call the preachers in America.) I said, "Yes, I am a preacher of the Gospel; and it is true that I preach in the streets and lanes of the city, which no other preacher in Philadelphia does. I preach also every Sunday morning at nine o'clock in Newmarket." I then asked him to step across the way to a friend's house;

where I asked him from whence he came. He answered, "From the Jerseys." I asked, had he any family. He said, "Yes, a wife and children." I asked, where he was going. He said he did not know. I likewise asked, "Does your wife know where you are?" He said, "No. The only reason why I left home was, I had been very uneasy and unhappy for half a year past, and could not rest any longer, but must come to Philadelphia."

I replied, "I first advise you to go back to your wife and children, and take care of them by obeying God in the order of His providence. It is unnatural to leave them in this manner; for even the birds of the air provide for their young. Secondly, you say you are unhappy: therefore the thing you want is religion, the love of God, and of all mankind; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When this takes possession of your heart, so as to destroy your evil tempers, and root out the love of the world, anger, pride, self-will, and unbelief, then you will be happy. The way to obtain this is, you must forsake all your sins, and heartily believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you return to the Jerseys, go to hear the Methodist preachers constantly, and pray to the Lord to bless the word; and if you heartily embrace it, you will become a happy man."

While I was exhorting him, the tears ran plentifully from his eyes. We then all kneeled down to pray; and I was enabled to plead and intercede with much earnestness for his soul, and to commend them all to God. When we arose from our knees, I shook him by the hand: he wept much, and had a broken heart; but did not know how to part with me. He then set out to go to his wife in the Jerseys; and I

for Baltimore, in Maryland: and I saw him no more; but I trust I shall meet him in heaven.

I cannot but remark here, that God sometimes steps out of the common way of His providence to help some souls; especially a poor ignorant person, who wants to serve Him, but knows not how, and hath a degree of His fear. When such persons pray sincerely to the Lord, He will direct, by His providence, to some person or book, to some means or other, by which they may be instructed and brought to the knowledge of the truth.

That night I preached at Chester, and in two days I arrived on the borders of Maryland. I then crossed Susquehannah river, and preached to a loving congregation of blacks and whites, who were remarkably affected; and the next day at Deer-Creek, to a large company of negroes and others. I had hurt my leg by a fall, and was obliged to preach sitting; but the Lord made His word spirit and life to the people.

Soon after this I came to Baltimore; where I had not been many weeks before a young man came to me with two horses, and entreated me to go to his father's house, about four miles from Baltimore, to visit his poor distressed brother, who was chained in bed, and whose case they did not understand, supposing him to be mad, or possessed with a devil. When I entered the room, I found the young man in the depth of despair. I told him Christ died for sinners; that He came to seek and to save lost sinners; yea, that He received the chief of sinners; and added, "There is no other name given under heaven, whereby men can be saved, but in and through our Lord Jesus Christ." The young man laid hold of those words, "The name of Jesus Christ;" and said he would call upon Jesus Christ

as long as he lived; and found some little hope within him, but knew no more how he must be saved than an Indian.

I sang a verse or two of a hymn, and then his father, and mother, and brethren joined me in prayer. The power of God was amongst us of a truth: we had melted hearts, and weeping eyes, and indeed there was a shower of tears amongst us. I know not when I have felt more of the Divine presence, or power to wrestle with God in prayer, than at this time. After we rose from our knees, I gave an exhortation; and continued to go to preach in their house every week or fortnight for some time. They loosed the young man that was bound; and the Lord shortly after loosed him from the chain of his sins, and set him at perfect liberty. He soon began to warn his neighbours, and to exhort sinners to flee from the wrath which is to come; and before I left the country, he began to travel a Circuit, and was remarkably successful. I followed him in Kent in Delaware; and verily believe he was instrumental in awakening a hundred sinners that year.

I was appointed the next year for Virginia, and was much dejected in spirit. I often felt much of this before a remarkable manifestation of the power and presence of God. In preaching and prayer the Lord strips and empties before He fills. I saw myself so vile and worthless as I cannot express; and wondered that God should employ me in His work. I was amazed when I first began to preach in Virginia! for I seldom preached a sermon but some were convinced and converted, often three or four at a time. I could scarcely believe them when they told me.

Among these was a dancing-master, who came first to hear on a week-day dressed in scarlet; and came several miles again on Sunday dressed in green. After preaching he spoke to me, and asked if I could come to that part where he lived some day in the week. I told him I could not, as I was engaged every day. I saw him at preaching again that week, and another man of his profession. When I was going to preach one morning, a friend said to me, "Mr. Shadford, you spoiled a fine dancing-master last week. He was so cut under preaching, and feels such a load of sin upon his conscience, that he moves very heavily; nay, he cannot shake his heels at all. He had a large profitable school; but hath given it up, and is determined to dance no more. He intends now to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic." I said, "It is very well. What is his name?" He said, "He is called Madcap." I said, "A very proper name for a dancing-master;" but I found that this was only a nickname, for his real name was Metcalf. He began to teach a school, joined our society, found the guilt and load of sin removed from his conscience, and the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him. He lived six or seven years after, and died a great witness for God, having been one of the most devoted men in our Connexion.

Going to preach one day, I was stopped by a large flood of water, and could not come at the bridge. I therefore turned back about half a mile to a large plantation; and having found the planter, I told him my case, and asked if I could sleep at his house. He said, I was welcome. After I had taken a little refreshment, I asked if that part of

the country was well inhabited; and on his answering in the affirmative, I said, "If it is agreeable, and you will send out to acquaint your neighbours, I will preach to them in the evening." He sent out, and we had many hearers; but they were as wild as boars. After I reproved them, they behaved very well under preaching. When I conversed with the planter and his wife, I found them entirely ignorant of themselves and of God. I laboured to convince them both, but it seemed to little purpose. Next morning I was stopped again, when he kindly offered to show me a way, some miles about, and go with me to preaching. I thanked him, and accepted his offer. As I was preaching that day I saw him weeping much. The Spirit of God opened the poor creature's eyes, and he saw the wretched state he was in. He stayed with me that night, and made me promise to go again to preach at his house. In a short time he and his wife became deep penitents, and soundly converted by the power of God. A very remarkable work began from that little circumstance; and before I left Virginia, there were sixty or seventy raised up in society in that settlement. There were four travelling preachers that year in the Circuit. We added eighteen hundred members, and had good reason to believe that a thousand of them were converted to God.

The spirit of the people began now to be agitated with regard to politics. They threatened me with imprisonment when I prayed for the king; took me up, and examined me, and pressed me to take the test-oath to renounce him for ever. I thought then I had done my work there, and set out, after I had been a year and a half amongst them, for Maryland.

But it being in the depth of winter, I was one night lost in the woods, when it was very cold, and the snow a foot deep on the ground. I could find no house, nor see any traveller; and I knew I must perish if I continued there all night. I alighted from my horse, kneeled down upon the snow, and prayed earnestly to God to direct me. When I arose I believed I should have something to direct me. I stood listening a short space, and at last heard a dog barking at some distance; so I followed the sound, and after some time found a house and plantation.

- o The next summer and winter I spent in Maryland; the winter on the eastern shore, where I could labour and be at peace; but as the test-oath must take place there also, I was brought to a strait. I had sworn allegiance to the king twice, and could not swear to renounce him for ever. I dare not play with fast-and-loose oaths, and swallow them in such a manner. We could not travel safe without a pass, nor have a pass without taking the oaths.

At our Quarterly Meeting I said to brother Asbury, "Let us have a day of fasting and prayer, that the Lord may direct us; for we never were in such circumstances as now since we were Methodist preachers." We did so, and in the evening I asked him how he found his mind. He said, he did not see his way clear to go to England. I told him I could not stay, as I believed I had done my work here at present; and that it was as much impressed upon my mind to go home now as it had been to come over to America. He replied, "Then one of us must be under a delusion." I said, "Not so; I may have a call to go, and you to stay;" and I believed we both obeyed the call of Providence. We

saw we must part, though we loved as David and Jonathan. And indeed these times made us love one another in a peculiar manner. O, how glad were we to meet, and pour our grief into each other's bosom!

Myself and another set off, having procured a pass from a colonel to travel to the general; and arriving at the head-quarters, we inquired for General Smallwood's apartments. Being admitted to his presence, and asked our business, we told his excellency that we were Englishmen, and both Methodist preachers; and as we considered ourselves subjects of Great Britain, we could not take the test-oaths: therefore we should be very glad to return home to our native land. "We cast ourselves," we added, "wholly upon your excellency's generosity; and hope, as you profess to be fighting for your liberties, you will grant us a pass to have liberty to return to our own land in peace." He answered roughly, "Now you have done us all the hurt you can, you want to go home." I told him our motive had been to do good: for this end we left our own country, and had been travelling through the woods for several years, to seek and to save that which was lost. It was true we could not beat the political drum in the pulpit, preaching bloody sermons; because we considered ourselves messengers of peace, and called to preach the Gospel of peace. At last he told us he would give us a pass to the English, if we would swear we would go directly to Philadelphia, and from thence embark to Great Britain. He then swore us, and generously gave us our liberty without any further trouble.

That evening, however, I was in great danger of

losing my life. A man leaped from behind a bush with his gun loaded, cocked, and presented at my breast, and swore like a fiend, and said, if I did not stop I should be a dead man; and called out as if he had more men in ambush. I stopped, and said very boldly, "Where are your men? If you will take us, let them come up." He swore again, if I did not dismount he would shoot me dead upon the spot. I dismounted, and said boldly to him again, "You have no right to stop me; I have a pass from the general." All this while he had his piece at my breast, yet I had no fear or dread; but I have often thought since, what a mercy it was that the piece did not go off, while he kept me so long at the end of it. At last he was struck with fear; and as no one came to his help, and we were two, and he did not know but we might have pistols, he said, "I will drop my gun, if you will not hurt me." I said, "I have not threatened to hurt you; I do not want to hurt a hair of your head: but why do you stop me on the road, and threaten my life, when I told you I had a pass from the general?" The fellow seemed ashamed and confounded. If he had any design to rob us, his heart failed him; and the Lord delivered us out of his hands.

We left our horses at a poor little inn, (for they had taken down the end of the large bridge that goes into Chester,) and with our saddle-bags upon our backs, we crept on our hands and knees on a narrow plank to that part of the great bridge that remained standing, and got our horses over the next morning. Thus, through the mercy and goodness of God, we got safe into Chester that night, and the next night into Philadelphia. Here we met three or four of our preachers, who, like ourselves,

were all refugees. I continued near six weeks before I got a passage, and then embarked for Cork in Ireland; from thence to Wales, and then crossed the passage to Bristol. I felt a very thankful heart, when I set my foot on English ground, in a land of peace and liberty, where was no alarm of war and bloodshed. They who have never been sick do not properly know the value of health. Neither are we in this land sufficiently thankful for the laws which protect our persons and property; and, above all, for our religious liberty to worship God according to our conscience, in the beauty of holiness.

I have received abundant mercies from a kind and indulgent Father since I came home; but have made small returns for them all, and feel greatly ashamed of myself, and deeply humbled for my coming short and living beneath my privilege for years that are past. I am now determined, through grace, to give my whole heart to God more than ever; to be more constant and regular in my walk; and to cast all my care upon Him who careth for me.

Last year indeed was a year of afflictions and trials to me. I was poorly in body most of the year, often very unable to travel, and sometimes had thoughts of desisting on that account. But, I bless God, things are changed: it seems as if the Lord hath given me a new commission, and added strength to body and mind. Since I came into the Kent Circuit, I set apart some hours in order to pray, that God might deepen the work of grace in my own soul, and make me more useful to others. He soon heard and answered, and hath brought my soul into such a liberty and fellowship with Himself, that He is always present. There is no

time when my Beloved is absent by day or by night; neither do I feel that propensity within me to sin as before. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after God; yea, thirsteth for the living God."

I see more than ever the preciousness of time; and the wisdom of improving it to the best purposes; the living every moment for God, the buying up every opportunity; the necessity of being more spiritual in my conversation, in order to grow in grace; the talking in company not about worldly things, but about our souls, God and Christ, heaven and eternal glory. O, how sad a case is it when we go to visit, to eat and drink with our friends, and say nothing, or that which is next to nothing, about their souls! If we had more of God in our hearts, there would be more of Him on our tongues, and shining in our lives; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. We should be often speaking, reproving sin, and labouring to bring souls to God, when we are out of the pulpit, as well as when we are in. Lord, make me more faithful in this, and in every respect, than ever I have been, for Christ's sake! Amen.

GEORGE SHADFORD.

CANTERBURY, *October 15th*, 1785.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF MR. SHADFORD:

BY THE REV. JOHN RILES.

MR. SHADFORD prayed and preached, till disease and infirmity arrested him in his career. After having travelled for twenty-three years, he became

a supernumerary ; but, instead of burying himself in obscurity, or sinking into indolence, he evinced the same unabated love for the souls of men, and the prosperity of the church of God, which he had done during the vigour of his health. He neither outlived his piety nor his usefulness. It was evident to all who had an intimate acquaintance with him, that he enjoyed communion and fellowship with God, and was ripening for eternal glory. The members of his two classes had a high opinion of his piety, and, when assembled round him, hung upon his lips, eagerly expecting some word of instruction or comfort ; for they had no doubt that God would make him an honoured instrument for their good. His method of meeting his classes was remarkably conciliating : there was nothing rough or austere in his manner ; he blended the most benevolent feelings with faithfulness, and never appeared satisfied unless all the people under his care loved God with all their hearts, with all their strength, and with all their might. To these his advice was, "Grow in grace."

On Monday, February 28th, Mr. Shadford dined with his affectionate friend Mr. Blunt, in company with his brethren. He then appeared in tolerable health, and ate a hearty dinner. In the course of the week he felt indisposed, from a complication of diseases. He was under no apprehension at this time that his departure was so near, as he had frequently felt similar affections ; and by timely applications to his medical friend, Mr. Bush, had been relieved. On Friday, March 1st, he with some difficulty met his class ; and afterwards said, it was impressed on his mind that he should never meet it more. On the Sunday afternoon I called to

inquire about his health ; when he said with unusual fervour,

“ To patient faith the prize is sure ;
And all that to the end endure
The cross shall wear the crown.”

His mind seemed fully occupied with the great and interesting realities of eternity, and he had no greater pleasure than in meditating and talking of the dying love of Christ. On the Lord's-day morning, March 10th, before I went to the chapel, I called to see him, and found he had slept most of the night : from this we flattered ourselves the complaint had taken a favourable turn, and were in hopes of his recovery. But when the doctor called, he said the disease was fast approaching to a crisis, and it was impossible for him to recover. Upon this information Mr. Shadford broke out in a rapture, and exclaimed, “ Glory be to God ! ” Upon the subject of his acceptance with God, and assurance of eternal glory, he had not the shadow of a doubt. While he lay in view of an eternal world, and was asked if all was clear before him, he replied, “ I bless God it is ; ” and added, “ Victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb ! ” When Mrs. Shadford was sitting by him, he repeated, “ What surprise ! what surprise ! ” I suppose he was reflecting upon his deliverance from a corruptible body, and his entrance into the presence of his God and Saviour, where every scene surpasses all imagination, and the boldest fancy returns weary and unsatisfied in its loftiest flights. Two friends, who were anxious for his recovery, called upon him ; and when they inquired how he was, he replied, “ I am going to my Father's house, and find religion to be an angel in death.”

A pious lady in the course of the day was particularly desirous of seeing him, and she asked him to pray for her: he inquired, "What shall I pray for?" She said, "That I may meet you in heaven, to cast my blood-bought crown at the feet of my Redeemer." He said with great energy, "The prize is sure." His pious sayings were numerous, and will long live in the recollection of many; but a collection of them all would swell this article beyond due limits. His last words were, "I'll praise, I'll praise, I'll praise!" and a little after he fell asleep in Jesus, on March 11th, 1816, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

For nearly fifty-four years Mr. Shadford had enjoyed a sense of the Divine favour. His conduct and conversation sufficiently evinced the truth of his profession. For many years he had professed to enjoy that perfect love which excludes all slavish fear: and if Christian tempers and a holy walk are proofs of it, his claims were legitimate. Maintaining an humble dependence upon the merits of the Redeemer, he steered clear of both Pharisaism and Antinomianism: his faith worked by love. Truly happy himself, there was nothing forbidding in his countenance, sour in his manners, or severe in his observations. His company was always agreeable, and his conversation profitable. If there was anything stern in his behaviour, it was assumed to silence calumniators and religious gossips. In short, he was a man of prayer and a man of God.

His abilities as a preacher were not above mediocrity; yet he was a very useful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord. In illustrating the doctrines of the Gospel, he was simple, plain, and clear. His discourses, though not laboured, were methodical,

full of scriptural phraseology, delivered with pathos, and accompanied with the blessing of God. He did not perplex his hearers with abstruse reasoning, and metaphysical distinctions, but aimed to feed them with the bread of life; and instead of sending them to a dictionary for an explanation of a difficult word, he pointed them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Mr. Shadford was free and generous. His little annual income, managed with a strict regard to economy, supplied his wants, and left a portion for the poor and needy. In visiting the sick, while he assisted them by his prayers and advice, he cheerfully administered to their wants. He spent no idle time in needless visits and unmeaning chit-chat; and though many of his friends in Frome would have considered it a high favour if he could have been prevailed upon to partake of their bounty, yet he always declined it, except once a week, at the hospitable table of his generous friend, Mr. Blunt, where he generally met the preachers with some part of their families. He loved his brethren in the ministry; and, like an old soldier who had survived many a campaign, he felt a pleasure in retracing the work of God, in which he had been engaged for more than half a century. He claimed it as a right, and deemed it a privilege, to have the preachers to take tea with him every Saturday afternoon. There was nothing sordid in his disposition; and, as far as I could ever observe, covetousness formed no part of his character. He considered the rule of his Saviour as having a peculiar claim upon his attention: "Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven."

His patience and resignation to the will of God

were such, that he has left few superior in those passive graces. Some years since he lost his eyesight, and continued in this state of affliction for several years; but, instead of murmuring at this dispensation of Providence, he bore it with Christian fortitude. This did not altogether prevent his usefulness; for, though the sphere of his action was circumscribed by it, he could still pray with the afflicted, converse with the pious, and meet several classes in the week. In this state he was advised to submit to an operation for the recovery of his sight. The trial proved successful; and when the surgeon said, "Sir, now you will have the pleasure of seeing to use your knife and fork," Mr. Shadford feelingly replied, "Doctor, I shall have a greater pleasure: that of seeing to read my Bible." This luxury he enjoyed; for when he was permitted to use his eyesight, the first thing he did was to read the word of life for three hours, reading and weeping with inexpressible joy. During the whole of his last short illness, he betrayed no symptoms of uneasiness, but cheerfully submitted to the will of God. Through the last few years of his life he glided smoothly down the stream of time. The assiduous attention of Mrs. Shadford to all his wants, her sympathy in the moments of pain, and unwearied attempts either to prevent his sufferings or lessen their force, greatly tended to soften them down. She has lost a pious and an affectionate husband, and the Methodist society in Frome one of its best members.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JASPER ROBINSON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born at Wooburn-Green, near High-Wycombe, in December, 1727. My parents dying when I was about twelve years old, I was left to the care of a good grandmother, who kept me at school till I was fifteen years of age, at which time I went as an apprentice to London. A few years after my apprenticeship was out I went to Worcester, and wrought at the china-factory about two years, and afterwards went to Liverpool. My whole life hitherto had been spent in youthful vanities and amusements, sometimes mixed with sin and iniquity of the grosser sort, which I now hate, and am ashamed to mention.

In the year 1759, being at Liverpool, I began to consider that if I went on in sin it would be my destruction; and I thought if there was a judgment to come, it would be my wisdom to prepare for it. I therefore began to break off all my known sins at a stroke, and took to fasting and prayer; and soon found the happy difference between serving God and

serving the devil. In the year 1760 I removed to Leeds in Yorkshire, where I got acquainted with the people called Methodists, and joined them, attended diligently to my class, and missed no other means of grace. In the summer of that year I heard Mr. Wesley preach, under one of whose sermons I was enabled to believe that my sins were forgiven. In the year 1763 I received a large effusion of the Holy Spirit, and seemed changed throughout the whole man. I then joined the select band, enjoyed much peace, and walked agreeable to the Gospel. In 1765, after conversing with a friend, I again felt a blessed change in my heart; but, through unbelief, soon let go my hold. Some time after, at a morning preaching, it appeared as if every evil was taken out of my heart; but I soon gave way to unbelief, and became as I was before. In the year 1770 it pleased God to bless several persons at Leeds, and I received a sweet, mild, and child-like spirit; but after a while, through unbelief, my corrupt nature prevailed again.

In 1776 I set out as a travelling preacher, and was appointed for Manchester, where I preached in great weakness and fear. However, I was encouraged much from the Lord, and from many of the poorer people; but some of the rich showed great indifference toward me. I believe I was of some use there, and in general that year was in pursuit of holiness; but though I received many marks of it, I put it off, and did not believe. In 1777 I went to Epworth Circuit. Here also holiness and usefulness were my chief aim. I received many tokens for good in my own heart, and trust I was somewhat profitable to the people. In 1778 I went to Lynn; and in 1779, to Aberdeen and Inverness. Here I was supported

with an uncommon degree of cheerfulness, and found Scotland a happy place for me, notwithstanding some inconveniences. In the latter end of the year, at Aberdeen, I was much tried, and much supported. In 1780 I came to Dundee, where I had a peaceful year, and was all for holiness. Yet I was tempted in an extraordinary manner, especially at Arbroath. I fasted and prayed night and day, but could get no rest. One day upon a mount, where I ran up to pray, a tremor seized me, and I thought the devil would become visible; but on a sudden I was sensible that Jesus was my Advocate, the Holy Spirit my Comforter, and God the Father my reconciled God. Now again I received such comfort in my mind, that nothing was wanting but faith to make me a partaker of full sanctification.

In 1781 I was appointed for Barnard-Castle; and in 1782 was sent to the Isle of Man, where I minuted down, at times, the occurrences of the day, an extract from which here follows:—

April 5th, 1783.—My mind was somewhat strengthened by reading Matthew xxi. 22: “All things, whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Lord, help me! I believe He does help me; for now I believe He has purified my heart by faith. I believe He has cast out all my enemies, and, through believing, they may be kept out. Glory be to God! I feel my spirit meek and pleasant. I am nothing, and wholly depend upon God, and desire nothing but Him.

“All my wants are lost in one :
Father, Thy only will be done.”

April 9th.—I have been kept without sin in my heart this day. I grow more and more confident,

that God has cleansed my heart from all unrighteousness. As I was riding yesterday, a thought passed through my mind, why I was not sanctified before. And it appeared it was because I would not believe ; and if I would not, then it is plain I might if I would. Is not this the case with many? Instead of simply believing, they are looking out for some extraordinary thing formed in their own imagination. This, I believe, has been the case with me for twenty years past. Many times in the course of these years, God gave me reason to believe it ; but instead of believing He had done it, I thought now I was in such a way that I could not well miss it ; and, Naaman-like, I expected God would lay His hand very powerfully upon me, and manifest Himself in such an extraordinary manner, that my soul would be immediately swallowed up in a holy flame of love. But finding not what I expected, I soon flagged in my pursuit, and my vile corruption returned again to my heart. And though in general I had power over all sin, inward and outward, and peace with God, and still sought after a clean heart ; yet I often thought that, according to His word, He was willing to give it to others, but had some particular exceptions against me.

I thought I strove more for it in every good word and work than many others that received it ; and yet the more I strove, the harder it seemed to be attained ; yea, I frequently thought the more I sought God the more He withdrew from me. Upon which, I used to fall into such weakness of mind, that I could scarce conceive anything at all of God, or of Christ. At other times, when I was earnest for purity, there would appear such a huge bar, or such a huge something, that it was impossible for

me to get any farther. Then I thought I might be contented with what I had got; and, resting here, I used to enjoy a tolerable degree of peace; though envy, lust, and barrenness frequently harassed me within. But O, how contrary to my expectation hath God dealt with me!

Two days before I received it, I was telling a brother, I could not see that I have grown in grace for twenty years past; because, when I would sail forward in the Divine life, there rose up always such a sand-bank, that my poor vessel could not make any way. But as I was reading the fore-mentioned passage, "All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive;" I thought I would once more pray for sanctification, because it is God's will, according to His word: and I thought I would depend upon Him, as I would upon the faithfulness of a friend; and should be as much disappointed in my expectation if He were not as good as His word, as if I were deceived by a man. I soon found my soul sink down into a kind of nothingness before God, and presently was persuaded that no sin remained in my heart, and that through believing I might ever keep it out. I thought, If this is the way to be sanctified, any one that has grace may believe to be sanctified, if he will; for none can be more weak in faith than myself, and yet I have no doubt but my heart is purified.

Thus, contrary to my former expectation of being something extraordinary when sanctified, I am emptied of self, and sink into an unfeigned nothingness, that Christ may be my all in all. I can only admire the goodness of God, respecting the manner in which He has been pleased to bestow this blessing upon me. For, had He given it in my own way, that is, in

rapturous joy, perhaps upon those transports subsiding, I should have immediately thought that all was gone, and then have fallen into unbelief. But now, if I am ever so low, or ever so elevated, I continue believing in the Lord, who is my aim and end. I desire nothing, I seek nothing, but God. He is my refuge, my rest, my portion, and my all.

“O how wonderful His ways!
All in love begin and end:
Whom His mercy means to raise,
First His justice bids descend.”

April 12th.—This day I find the Lord very gracious. Upon a trial that used to make me very hasty in spirit, I found not the least shadow of it in my heart. The state of my soul at present cannot be better expressed than by this verse,—

“Let the waves around thee rise,
Let the tempest threat the skies;
Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene;
Thy sure anchor cannot fail,
Enter'd now within the veil.”

April 14th.—I find the refreshing springs of grace purifying my heart more and more. Blessed be God, the Father of mercies! He is my God, my portion, and my all. This night I found Him very gracious to me in preaching.

April 16th.—I am more and more clear that my heart is entirely changed. The word of God, the Spirit of God, and my soul's experience, agree together. This morning I was elevated in my mind; but I see it is dangerous, and that I have need to watch against it. My soul chooses Christ above ecstatic joy or transport, before everything that

tends to alienate my mind from Him, yea, above all gifts without Him; for, was it possible to be in heaven without Him, I had rather be on earth with Him.

April 17th.—The Lord is still gracious. Satan tempts, but I get the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Friday, 25th.—I have been in such a heavy state this day, that it renders me very unprofitable: but, blessed be God, I find that whether heavy or alert, weak or strong, he that believeth shall be saved. So that I still hope my heart is clean, though sometimes I am hardly sure.

April 16th to 29th.—My state is pretty even, with some particular spiritual satisfaction. Blessed be God, I have reason to judge the root of sin is out of my heart; because when I am tempted, nothing within takes hold of it. I find it easier to keep sin out, than conquer it when in.

May 12th.—I hope the Lord is establishing my heart in grace more and more. This morning I have had glorious conceptions of the blessed Trinity. So that my soul can say, "O God, Thou art my God: glory be to Thee, O Thou Most High."

May 17th.—Blessed be God, I am kept in peace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Happy is the man that has the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God.

October 17th.—For three days past I have been much encouraged to hope for all the fulness of God. The promise as well as command is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and I hope I shall not rest short of it. O my God, give me power now, and continue it to my life's end, for Jesus Christ's sake!

“ The promise is sure
To the helpless and poor,
Their souls as their bodies Thou surely canst cure.”

October 30th.—Thou blestest me much, O my God ; but I shall never be satisfied until I awake up after Thy likeness.

November 1st.—I fasted and prayed for purity of heart. O, when shall I be perfectly free, and all my soul unreservedly devoted to God ! I am day by day pursuing holiness, and hate every appearance to the contrary.

November 7th.—I appear to myself little better than an atheist ; so dark and ignorant is my heart. I can hardly think well of any religion, short of all light, all love, and holiness ; and the more I seek for it, the more dark and distracted my mind appears. What can I do ? I am tempted to dispute the truth of God’s word. O that He would answer for Himself, in love and faithfulness to my heart ! Who can deliver me ? O, I read that One can : but I fear His willingness. Yet, Thou knowest, Lord, I should gladly be delivered now. Why tarriest Thou, O my God ?

December 10th.—The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. Blessed be the Lord for this !

“ ’Tis all my hope, and all my plea,
That Jesu’s blood was shed for me.”

January 7th, 1784.—Glory be to God in the highest ! The latter part of the old year ended, as the new one begins,—well. I overcome all my sin by the blood of the Lamb. For these three or four weeks past, I have walked in blessed liberty through believing. Lord, increase my faith, for there is nothing like living by faith.

April 2d.—I was waked this morning with a loud

voice sounding in my ears, "Say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." It was repeated again very sharply, "Tell Zion, Thy God reigneth." Lord, help me so to do. I have several times had such solemn views of Zion's prosperity, that I am in hopes the Gospel will bear all before it in this island.

April 19th.—Ah! what is this life to him that is born to die? I wonder that Methodists will have anything to do with the pleasures, fashions, or riches of this world. How few cry out in their counting-house, "In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us!"

In July I left the Isle of Man, in a very prosperous way, and was appointed for Whitehaven.

In 1785 I went to Bolton Circuit, where I spent an agreeable year. Here also I made a few remarks of my experience:—

Monday morning, September 2d.—I waked about four o'clock with my soul breathing after God. All evil seemed removed from my mind, and I was like a morning without clouds. I had a clear view of living by faith, and of being freed from everything but God; to have Him the only portion of my soul. These words ran in my mind till my eyes gushed out with tears,

"Never shall my triumphs end."

This state brings us into all calmness and serenity, and shields the mind against every temptation.

On Tuesday morning also I had a satisfying sense of faith. I see it is no matter what I am beside, in the esteem of men, whether wise or ignorant, honoured or abased; or how many my sins have been, or how encompassed about with present infirmities. If I can believe God is reconciled unto me in Jesus, all is well. I stand by faith, and not by

works. I have felt a few temptations since ; but I find my privilege is to look unto Jesus, and be saved.

September 10th.—I hear Mr. Fletcher is dead. May I follow him as he followed Christ ! He was a star of the first magnitude in God's church ; but now he is gone to shine in glory, and to set no more for ever : a fixed star to all eternity. The wise shall inherit glory ; and I think, if there was a wise man in the world, he was one.

September 13th.—I was discouraged this day ; but I prayed unto God, who comforted and delivered me from all my fears. Glory be to Thee, O Lord, who never failest them that seek Thee ! When man discourages, how clear it makes our faith, that God does help ! Discouragement from man weans us from man ; and help from God draws nearer to God.

November 23d.—I waked this morning at four o'clock. I thought much about believing, and what many assert, that you must believe now, and you have what you believe for, whether pardon or holiness. I fear this has led many, of a warm imagination, to believe they are sanctified, when a little time has proved they have been mistaken. I was much perplexed about their manner of speaking, and considered our Lord's words, "Whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing ye receive it, ye shall have." This I could not well understand, how I was to believe I receive, before it was really given unto me. And it came into my mind, that God speaketh of things that are not, as though they were. Faith in like manner says, "I have it, though it is not yet given ;" that is, believes in the certainty of it, as if already come to pass. Thus faith anticipates the blessing, and makes us as sure of it as if it were already accomplished. In this manner, a believer may go

on, from strength to strength, and from grace to grace; believing and rejoicing in the sure word of God's promise, until he believes himself to heaven. Thus faith lays hold on every blessing, yea, glory itself; but leaves the time and manner unto God.

November 28th.—In meditating, I had a very satisfying view of the covenant of grace, in contradistinction to the covenant of works; namely, As all have sinned, the covenant of works shows no mercy. The covenant of grace is full of compassion. In this God is reconciled to us by the blood of His dear Son; and waits to be gracious to every returning sinner, in blotting out his sins, and remembering his iniquities no more. He has promised to write His law in our hearts, even His law of love. Who-soever lives in obedience to this law of love, sinneth not; for, having always a loving intention to please God, he never offends Him, neither is God offended with him. In this covenant of grace, confirmed by the blood of Jesus, all involuntary ignorances, mistakes, and infirmities, God does not charge upon him as sin: nothing but wilful acts. Thus: he that is born of God, and lives in this covenant under the law to Christ, does not commit sin, neither can he sin, because his loving intention is always to please God, His seed remaining in him. He loves his neighbour, and love worketh no evil; but contrariwise—good. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. According to the tenor of the first covenant, no man is free from sin; but he that fulfils the law of love, the love of God and his neighbour, is as free from it, according to the new covenant, as he would be, according to the old, were he to fulfil the utmost demand of the moral law.

In the eye of the law, every man is a sinner; but

in the covenant of grace, he that loveth is free. To reason upon the law is bringing a man into bondage; but to believe according to grace, is living in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Many who are continually harping upon the purity of the law, and viewing Christian liberty in this mirror, grow blinder and blinder, and cannot see how a man can live without sin. But how unwise is this! If the Father of all mercies, the God of love, in consideration of the impossibility (through weakness of the flesh) of being made perfect by the law, has substituted a milder covenant, full of grace, mercy, and love, whereby we may thus live, why should we not immediately embrace it? One would think we should encourage one another, by saying, "Well, brother, though you cannot, by the law, obtain the perfection of the law; yet by the grace of God you may obtain the perfection of the Gospel, even the depth of humble love." But, instead of this, the law is frequently made use of to discourage the expectation of obtaining holiness by the Gospel. One says, "The law is so pure, that I do not see how I can be free from sin." Another, "If I was clean from sin, what need should I have for the atonement?" A third reasons, "Sin is in the flesh which covers my bones; and therefore this putrefied cask will make all that comes out of it impure." By this way of reasoning they conclude, they can never be made clean from sin on this side the grave; and they discourage those who desire it according to the Gospel. O, what a pity it is, that we are so slow in believing, or looking into the glorious law of liberty and love, and continuing therein, that we may be happy!

J. R.

*Account of the Death of Mr. Jasper Robinson,
Minister of the Gospel; in a Letter from Mr.
Dermott to Mr. Pawson.*

HORNCASTLE, *December 14th, 1797.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE may now add to the number of those faithful servants of the Lord, whom He hath called to their reward since the last Conference, our highly-valued friend and brother Mr. Jasper Robinson, whose happy spirit took its flight to the paradise of God the 6th instant. Never since the death of our reverend father, Mr. Wesley, have I seen so many tears shed by the survivors as at Mr. Robinson's funeral. He will live long in the esteem of many who knew his worth; and I am sure his memory must be precious to me as long as I retain a sense of the Divine goodness, of which he was a living and a dying witness. I have gone to many to learn how to live, but I went to Mr. Robinson to learn both to live and to die.

In the latter end of October he was seized, while going about his Master's business in the Circuit, with the gout in his feet. He struggled forward till he came to Mr. Robinson's at Langham-row, where he delivered his last public discourse. Here I met with my dear friend, and found him full of faith and love, as usual. He kindly inquired into the state of my mind, and spoke of the communion which he had enjoyed with God while under affliction. We had some profitable conversation respecting the Divine presence with the followers of the Lord Jesus, and we spent some time together in serious solemn prayer. When we parted, he earnestly

entreated me to pray that his patience might hold out to the end of his race.

He so far recovered as to be able to walk about a little, and expressed a strong desire to go home to Horncastle. Accordingly, he set forwards, and got as far as brother Abbot's, where, on the 20th, he wrote me the following letter :—

“LAST Monday Mr. George Robinson came with me to this place. I got here with great ease, and was not much fatigued. I intended to proceed on my journey, but was afflicted with such a shortness of breath, that I could not sit upon my horse. Last Friday night I was almost suffocated, so that I felt my life in danger ; but in a moment it pleased God to relieve me, and I breathed very easy till morning. When I got up, my breath was much affected, and I sent for the doctor, who told me it was a spasm upon my lungs, which obstructed my breathing. His prescription gave me relief, and I slept well at night. Yesterday I was better, but at night the spasm returned. I was again relieved ; but still I breathe with difficulty.

“I want, if it shall please God, to get to you ; but sometimes I doubt that I shall not be able. I am not able to preach at present. My dear friend, pray for me. I am sometimes very comfortable. The Lord give me submission to His will. Brother and sister Abbot are exceedingly kind to me. The Lord reward them for their labour of love. I cannot tell whether to subscribe myself your living or your dying brother, but I will subscribe myself

“Your affectionate brother,

“J. ROBINSON.”

On the 24th we got him home, and I found him labouring under a very great difficulty of breathing, and evidently sinking under his affliction, but perfectly resigned to the will of God, whether for life or death. Not a single murmur was ever heard from him at any time. A friend asked him how he felt when he thought himself dying at brother Abbot's. He answered, "I felt something of apprehension respecting the pains and feelings of nature; but I had no fear at all beyond death."

A little while before he was taken ill, he dreamed one night, that the chariot of Israel was come to convey him away, in which was the happy spirit of the late venerable Mr. Hanby, and another old preacher who is gone to glory.

He expressed himself infinitely thankful that he had only his bodily affliction to endure, and heartily praised God for all His mercies; especially for the strong confidence he had in the Redeemer, and the blessed prospect, through faith in His name, of a glorious immortality.

On Saturday, 26th, I was obliged to leave my highly-esteemed friend, after spending a little time with him in prayer, in which his whole soul appeared to be drawn out after God. On the 28th his weakness greatly increased; but our friends rendered him every assistance in their power; for which he expressed the deepest gratitude both to God and them. Not the shadow of discontent ever made its appearance in him at any time.

December 2d.—Several of our friends came in along with brother Aikenhead. They all kneeled down around his bed, and employed some time in solemn prayer. The room seemed to be filled with the glory of God, and their hearts were as melting

wax while bowed before Him. Mr. Robinson continued for some time with his hands lifted up to heaven, as if deeply engaged with the Lord in silent prayer, as had been frequently the case before. He then desired to be left alone for a little time.

I was obliged to leave him for a few days; and upon my return found him exceedingly weak, but still able to converse a little. My wife and daughter read to him the 31st and 36th Psalms, and John xiv. He said to me, "Who could have thought that I should have such ease of body and mind in such circumstances?" He was restless by reason of his heavy afflictions, but at the same time accounted them light, and only for a moment. He said, "I have often thought where I shall die;" and added, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

On the last day of his life he joined in prayer with great fervency of spirit. His Amens pierced our very hearts; and his soul was filled with the love of God. He said, "I am quite clear from all distressing doubts respecting my acceptance with God. I feel as free from condemnation as if I had never sinned at all." Indeed, throughout his affliction, he was wonderfully preserved from the power of the enemy, who was never permitted to approach him; but the Lord blessed him with the utmost tranquillity. "The Lord," said he, "encompasses me about with mercies, and He makes all my bed in my sickness. I have no uneasiness respecting my soul: it is my bodily trouble only that I feel."

Towards evening he repeated,

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath," &c.

And, looking up, he said to my daughter, "Remem-

ber, you must die!" The next morning, December 6th, about five o'clock, his happy soul took its flight to the kingdom of glory without a sigh or groan.

His memory will long be precious to all the churches where he has laboured. He was always the Christian, and lived and died a witness of the full salvation of God. The last words he had written in his journal were, "Thanks be to the Lord for all His mercies!" O, may I live and die like Jasper Robinson!

I am your affectionate brother,

GEORGE DERMOTT.

I HAVE been well acquainted with brother Robinson for near forty years. When I first knew him, he lived at Leeds. He was then a pattern of solid piety and serious godliness, and remarkably zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. He was exceedingly useful as a class-leader, and likewise in visiting the sick and the poor. Very few have excelled him in these labours of love; for which reason some of his friends have always thought that he could not be more useful as a travelling preacher than he was in the discharge of those duties.

While he laboured as a local preacher in Leeds Circuit, he was much respected for his Christian simplicity, sincerity, and unaffected piety; and since he commenced itinerant preacher, his conduct has, perhaps, been as unblamable in every respect, as any one who ever laboured among us. He was of a meek and quiet spirit, and remarkably humble, patient, and teachable; yet truly zealous and active.

His ministerial abilities were not so great as some others; yet upon the whole he was an acceptable preacher. I have heard him with much satisfaction publish the glad tidings of salvation, with such an holy fervour of soul, mixed with zeal, life, and power, as I always wish those to feel who speak in the name of the Lord. His whole heart was in the work; and he was in very deed a man of one business. And at all times he discovered himself to be a faithful advocate for a present, free, and full salvation. He followed after, till he attained, this glorious liberty; and lived and died in the enjoyment of it.

It is undoubtedly the fervent desire of all who consider the vast importance of spiritual mercies and everlasting happiness, to live the life, in order to die the death, of the righteous; and it affords us unspeakable satisfaction when we can with propriety apply the words of the psalmist, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

J. PAWSON.

THE following character of Mr. Robinson was given by the Conference :—

JASPER ROBINSON, "an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile." He was a travelling preacher three-and-twenty years, during which his unaffected simplicity of manners, his steady and upright conduct, his mild and gentle spirit, never failed to gain him the affectionate regard of all the pious people who knew him. His whole heart was in the

work of God, and many will praise the Lord for his labours. He was remarkably patient in suffering, and entirely resigned to the will of his heavenly Father. His memory will long be precious to the people among whom he laboured. He lived and died a happy witness of the full salvation of God. He fell asleep in Jesus, December 6th, 1797, aged seventy-three years.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS HANSON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

CROWAN, *March 11th*, 1780.

It is very difficult to write where self is concerned. But as I am requested, I shall endeavour to give a brief account of those circumstances in my life which particularly discover the Divine pity towards me.

I was born of honest parents, in Horbury, near Wakefield, in the county of York, I think in May, 1733, the youngest of two sons at a birth; my parents having had six sons and two daughters. He that was born with me died in his childhood. My father died when I was near eleven years old. Six out of the seven of us that lived have found mercy and forgiveness through Christ. My truly pious mother had the happiness to see it before she died, though she has been dead above twenty years. Two of my elder brothers fell into sin, and turned back; but one is restored, I hope, to favour and to heaven: the other is not yet recovered; but O, may he be soon!

We always lived in love and harmony. I never had, to my knowledge, twenty angry words with

either brother or sister in my life. I do not remember to have heard an oath in all the family. About thirty-four years ago my mother and three elder brothers were brought to God. I was then convinced and a little awakened, by hearing Mr. Francis Scott: the very man, I think, by whom my ever-dear mother had been awakened and brought to God. From that time my good desires did not quite leave me. I hope my mother's prayers, tears, and advice will never leave my mind and heart. I was a thoughtless, careless, Christless son, before that time, and had no fear of God before my eyes.

I was placed, at about thirteen years of age, in the profession which my father and brothers had followed; namely, a clothier. I now often went to hear the Methodist preachers, though we had some miles to go. Many of those that are now, I doubt not, singing in heaven, used to go and come with me in the evenings through the woods; often singing those sweet words,—

“Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood;
For Jesus is bringing lost sinners to God.”

I used to pray inwardly in my way to the preaching; yea, and often turned aside to pray. I was afraid to be seen or known to pray alone: so I sought out every private place that I could.

We had much persecution then, and a great deal of talk about false prophets in sheep's clothing. But the most common name for them was, “the damnation preachers,” which I thought was far from sheep's clothing: so that did not hinder me much. But I was greatly troubled with horrid suggestions, and had many fears, no doubt from the wicked one, in private prayer; that I was for quite laying it aside. I was afraid to go to it; and yet I durst not

give it over. I was in a strait on another account,—I was ashamed of the Gospel: I did not stand firm on God's side; and yet I durst not be on the devil's side. I was very fearful of being deceived, reasoning and doubting for several years, whether the knowledge of pardon was attainable here. I thought, God did forgive men their sin; but that none could know it for himself. But, afterwards, I was clearly convinced by hearing my brother's experience, and weighing the scriptures that he urged for it. And I had then a comfortable hope of one day finding it; but for some years I was between hope and fear. When I was about nineteen years old, in 1752, by my eldest brother's advice, I went to Mr. Byrries, at the Deighn-house, near Netherthong. Here I stayed for near four years. Divine Providence certainly cast me here, where I had all the advantages I could wish for, having two schoolmasters near at hand. I wrought seven or eight hours a day, with my book before me, and spent the rest of the day and part of the night in learning. This I did during the whole time I was here. Mr. Hinsliff taught me to write and cast accounts for above a year; and Mr. Wood, of Netherthong, the Latin master, taught me a little Latin and Greek. I got what I could by heart in the day, and said it to him at night. But as soon as I left this place, I laid these studies aside, and re-assumed them no more to this day. I have since had other work, and could not see any absolute need of these in the particular service to which I was providentially called.

We had no Methodist preachers here. I did not hear ten sermons, except at church, for nearly four years. Here I was greatly beloved by those that had any seriousness, and greatly hated by those that

had none; for I could not hold my tongue about religion: my conscience would not let me be quiet many a time. I told them we must get our sins forgiven, or perish for ever. And frequently I wept with some of them about it. Several thereabouts came to me for advice concerning their souls; though I, poor creature, was ignorant enough, and well nigh lost in my book.

My conscience during these years often alarmed me. But now it would give me no rest for want of Christ and pardon. So I determined, notwithstanding many offered me favours in worldly things, to go home to my mother and brothers. Several wept, and entreated me to stay. I told them, "I cannot save my soul here: I have not the means suitable for it."

Home I came, in 1756, with a full resolution to seek Christ till I found Him, or die in the seeking of Him. Then I sold, or gave away, nearly all my books, and through grace began to be as diligent in the ways of God as I had been in study.

I now added fasting to all the other means of grace. Soon after this, the tempter told me, "Thou art good enough." But a sermon of honest brother Ash, on Gal. ii. 21, and the words of my dear mother, who said, "Though I bore you, if you do not come to Christ stripped of all, you will never be saved," tore away my self-righteousness. God now taught me to expect Christ and pardon every hour. My burden was too great to be expressed, when God had, by various means, (particularly by reading the Bible, and the extract of Ambrose on the New Birth, on my knees,) brought me, for three weeks, to the brink of despair. Just before I found pardon I was miserable beyond description.

On July 16th, at night, 1757, under my brother Joseph's prayer, I yielded, sunk, and, as it were, died away. My heart, with a kind, sweet struggle, melted into the hands of God. I was for some hours lost in wonder, by the astonishing peace, love, and joy which flowed into my heart like a mighty torrent. When I came to recollect myself, I asked, "What hast Thou done?" It was sweetly but deeply impressed, "I have made thee Mine." No tongue can tell what peace, love, joy, and assurance I then felt. My willing heart and tongue replied, "Hast Thou thus loved me? Here I am, willing to spend and be spent for Thee." God now gave me to see all creation, redemption, grace, and glory in a new light; and everything led me to love and praise Him.

From this night I could not hold my tongue from speaking of the things of God. A few days after my happy conversion, I felt anger at one who persecuted us. Soon after my peace left me. Then the tempter said, "He that is born of God sinneth not. But thou hast sinned: therefore thou art not born of God. Thou hast deceived thyself." I was then in a great measure ignorant of his devices; so gave up my shield, and was in the depth of distress, ready to choose strangling, for nearly two hours. It then came to my mind, "What if I had deceived myself? pardon is free, and given in an instant. It is ready for needy, lost sinners: I will go as I am, cast myself on the ground, and on Christ at once." My former peace, love, and joy returned in a moment. This sore trial taught me more watchfulness. After this I walked in great love and peace for nearly two years, buying up every opportunity for prayer, hearing, and reading. I read the chief part of the Christian Library, with Mr. Wesley's Works that

were then published, and several other books, to my great help, instruction, and comfort.

Now the same Spirit that witnessed my adoption, cried in me, night and day, "Spend and be spent for God!" Yet never was anyone more timorous: I thought the work so great, and my abilities so small. I cried, "I am not fit;" I wept, and kept it to myself for months. O, what a struggle had I between my unfitness, and my love to God and souls! After this, the Osset people, by earnest entreaties, prevailed on me to pray in public. And it pleased God to make this the means of awakening some sinners. Then I was persuaded to exhort. God blessed this also to the conversion of several in the neighbouring towns. Now began my warfare with the various sects about us, who came, when I had preached at Osset, to dispute with me often till midnight. But I was soon heartily weary of dispute; for it caused a decay in my peace and love.

My inbred corruptions now began to perplex me more than ever, and to be a heavy load indeed for some time. But one day meeting with a few young men, as I often did, God gave me such a deliverance, and such a weight of love, as I had not heretofore. I seemed too happy to live on earth, and thought God was going to take me home. My joy allowed me little sleep for weeks. I told it to none but my brother; and to him only, when I could keep it no longer from him.

Not long after this, a letter came from Mr. Thomas Olivers, (who afterwards behaved with the tenderness and wisdom of a father to me,) to let me know that I was appointed by the Conference to travel in the then York Circuit. This was done wholly without my knowledge. No one had spoken

to me about it, nor I to anyone. I already preached four or five times a week about home, and loved the people too well to desire to leave them. In my answer to Mr. Olivers, I said, "I have no doubt of my call to preach; but have no desire to be a travelling preacher. I am not fit for it. I cannot come." He replied, "If your father was dead, and your mother lay a dying, you must come and preach the Gospel." I wept a fortnight about it. I said to my brother, "Go you: you are more fit than I am." He said, "God knows who is fit. He has called you: therefore go." The gracious Spirit working in me a willingness to spend and be spent for God, and my brother persuading me, I went in 1760, and through grace have continued unto this day. In all this time, I call the all-seeing God and His people to bear witness, that I have sought nothing but His glory in my own salvation and that of others.

I have been in most of the Circuits in the kingdom. And, I trust, God has been pleased to use me, and those with me, during these twenty years, to unite thousands to the societies. But it is better to leave this to God and His people. They are our epistle, written by Christ to the rejoicing of our hearts. May their conversion be known and read by all that know them!

I have been in dangers by snow-drifts, by land-floods, by falls from my horse, and by persecution: I have been in sickness, cold, pain, weakness, and weariness often; in joyful comforts often; in daily love and peace, but not enough; in grief and heaviness through manifold temptations often. I have had abundance of trials, with my heart, with my understanding and judgment, with various reason-

ings among friends and foes, with men and devils, and most with myself. But in all these, God in mercy has hitherto so kept me, that I believe none can with justice lay any single immoral act to my charge, since the day when God through Christ forgave my sins.

All my design in preaching has been, and is, to bring sinners to Christ; and to build up saints in their most holy faith, hope, and love, to a perfect man.

To this end the chief matter of my preaching has been the essentials of religion; such as, the lost state of man, depraved, guilty, and miserable by nature; his justification through the alone merit of Christ by faith only, together with the witness and fruits of it; the new birth, the necessity, benefits, and fruits of it, in all inward and outward holiness. I have endeavoured to explain the new covenant in its benefits, condition, precepts, threats, and rewards. I have shown that perfect love is attainable here, by those that press for it with their whole heart. I teach piety to God, justice and mercy to men, and sobriety in ourselves, endeavouring to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man, in every station of life and in all relations. I also endeavour to guard souls against the temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil; against the hurtful opinions that surround them; and against the hindrances of their repentance, faith, hope, love, and holiness. I have also shown them the danger of delay, of refusal, or of drawing back to sin, death, and hell.

In the pulpit I have seldom meddled with the decrees, or the five points of debate. I suffered so much loss by them before I set out to travel, that I

determined not to meddle with them, but when my brethren were in danger of being led aside or hurt by them. So far as I see clear evidence for any of these things, I hold and prove them as occasion offers. But where I see no sufficient proof of a proposition, I leave the discussion of them to those that are wiser. But yet I cannot help thinking, that many of these disputes are not much more than a learned play: and if wise men would but play with these in good humour, it would not much grieve one. But when they grow angry, and call each other by vile names, because they differ from them herein, no doubt the devil has a great hand in it. He aims to undo, by the non-essentials in religion, the good that is done by insisting on the essentials. This has often been a cause of fear and grief to me. But having resolved to take Christ for my sufficient Teacher, I am now contented to know what He has revealed, and to leave the rest to another world. I have from my beginning thought myself the poor man's preacher; having nothing of politeness in my language, address, or anything else. I am but a brown-bread preacher, that seeks to help all I can to heaven, in the best manner I can. O that in the day of Christ's judgment I may rejoice, not only in the sincerity of my labour, but in knowing that I have not preached and laboured and suffered without fruit, but have been the instrument of gaining souls to, and of keeping them with, Christ! And O that He may present them to the Father, without blame, in perfect love! This is the real desire of

THOMAS HANSON.

THE following character of Mr. Hanson is given by the Methodist Conference :—

THOMAS HANSON departed this life October 18th, 1804, in the seventy-second year of his age, and forty-fifth of his ministry. He spent about twenty-two years in the vineyard of the Lord, as an itinerant preacher; and when able to bear the fatigues of itinerancy no longer, he retired to Horbury, near Wakefield, the place of his nativity, where he spent the last twenty years of his life, copying the example of his Lord and Master, "who went about doing good." He was a plain, honest, faithful, zealous man. His death was a comment on the words of the Psalmist: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. ROBERT WILKINSON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

BEFORE hearing the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, I was often terrified in dreams and visions of the night. Sometimes I thought I was falling down steep precipices; at others, that the devil was standing over me to take me away immediately.

At such times I have often waked, shrieking in such a manner as terrified all who heard me. Afterwards I heard the Gospel for a season, at Rookhope, in the county of Durham; but the people not receiving the joyful sound, the servants of God forsook the place. I was left with much uneasiness on my mind: what I formerly delighted in was now hateful to me. I could play no more on the violin, or at cards, nor sing vain songs; neither had I a desire to speak any more than I was forced to. The people saw my distress, but, not knowing God, could not point out a cure.

In this condition I continued for some weeks. I began to read religious books, and likewise to bow

my knees before God in secret. Sometimes I could weep much ; but, having no one to direct me, after a time I got back into folly, and pursued my evil practices with more eagerness than before. About four years after, I was called to live near Weardale chapel. I then heard the Methodists very frequently. I was often softened under the word. I never found a desire to mock the people, as many do ; but rather stood in awe of them. But all this while I continued in my sins. The first Sunday in Lent, 1767, I heard, as usual, a Methodist preacher in the afternoon. I did not then find that the word made any impression upon me. But at night on my bed the Lord cut me to the heart, and I could not help roaring for the disquietness of my soul. I then felt I must perish eternally, unless some way to escape were found which I knew not of. Immediately I wished for the Methodists to pray with me ; but in particular for a young man, Stephen Watson, who is now in glory. From the time he knew Jesus, he was a pattern to all the society. And after having walked four years in the light of God's countenance, he departed in the full assurance of faith ; having testified for many months before his death, that the blood of Jesus had cleansed him from all sin. His last words were, "Glory be to God, for ever and ever ! Amen, and Amen !"

One morning I fell down on my knees to ask forgiveness for my many offences, and continued to cry night and day. My burden increased, and temptations were very strong. I then began to compare myself with the most sinful of my companions, and with other notorious sinners I had heard of ; but I could find no equal. I said, from the ground of my heart, "Of all the sinners under heaven, I am the

chief." The enemy then suggested, that I was guilty of a sin which God never would pardon.

Tongue cannot express the distress I then felt. The heart knoweth its own bitterness. I thought, never man suffered what I did. That saying, "A dreadful sound in his ears," continually followed me. I found the enemy ready, day and night, to devour me. When in private prayer, I thought he had hold of my clothes. For many nights he suggested, if I prayed, he would appear and tear me in pieces. Yet I durst not but pray, though my prayers were mostly made up of sighs and groans. One day, drawing towards evening, the enemy came in as a flood, and the temptation was to put an end to a wretched life. I resisted, but it continued to come as quick as lightning; and I was afraid that the tempter would prevail, so that I durst not carry a penknife about me. That was the only time I was banished from private prayer, because I durst not stay alone. That night we met our class: I then cried out to one of my brethren, who was waiting for me to go with him to the meeting, "O Cuthbert, I am driven to distraction!" He spake to me as comfortably as he could, but, as we walked together, I found as if one was hanging on the skirts of my clothes. After the first prayer was over, it was with difficulty I rose from my knees. When the leader asked how I found the state of my soul, I answered, "I am left without one spark of hope that God will ever have mercy on me." "No," said he, "you are not; for if you were, you would not now be using the means of grace."

He encouraged me to follow on; but I still found no comfort. All the time of my convictions I had but very little ease; and when I had, I had a fear

almost equal to my pain, lest I should fall back into sin, or speak peace when God did not. O, how I longed for deliverance from sin! I often cried, "Lord, if I am for ever banished from Thy presence, let me not sin again!"

Not long after, that text in Psalm li. followed me, "Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." I thought, if God did pardon me, He could refuse none, but the foulest on this side hell might come and welcome. But this was the sting,—I thought He would not. However, I kept using the means, and went frequently among the Methodists, to get them to pray with me. And I would have been glad if they had asked me to stay all night, but shame would not let me tell them so. I often thought I never could get over another night. My neighbours said I was beside myself, for I could not rest in my bed. I often rose and wandered in the fields, weeping and bewailing my desperate state. But, blessed be God! He that wounds can heal.

In the beginning of July, as Stephen Watson and I were sitting together, he had a volume of the Christian Library in his hand, out of which he read one of Mr. Rutherford's Letters. When he had done, "Stephen," said I, "I find, as it were, a melting warmth in my breast." "So do I too," said he. He then asked, "Cannot you believe that God has pardoned your sins?" "No," said I, "I dare not:" on which I immediately lost my comfort.

Sunday, July 12th.—Joseph Watson preached in the chapel in Weardale. He gave out that hymn,—

“ All ye that pass by,
To Jesus draw nigh :
To you is it nothing that Jesus should die?
Your ransom and peace,
Your surety He is ;
Come, see if there ever was sorrow like His.

“ For you and for me
He pray'd on the tree : .
The prayer is accepted, the sinner is free.”

Then all within me cried out,

“ That sinner am I,
Who on Jesus rely,
And come for the pardon God cannot deny.”

I then believed that God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins, and found that peace which arises from a sense of reconciliation. The people of God who knew my distress perceived by my countenance that the Lord was gracious to me, before I had the opportunity to tell them. I then went rejoicing home, and could not help telling what God had done for my soul.

It was not long before my faith was tried. One of our brethren, a Calvinist, lent me a book. As I read, I thought Mr. Wesley was quite in the wrong, and I found something in me that rose against him; yet one thing I remember I could not swallow, which was, the author asserted that a sense of inbred sin would reconcile us to death. “No,” said Mr. Wesley, “nothing but perfect love.” Indeed I could not persuade myself that the sting of death could reconcile us to death itself! However, I read and reasoned myself miserable. Yet the Lord gave me grace to wrestle with Him in prayer; and every day I found, more or less, the witness of my sonship. I

was then afraid, if I sought after holiness, I should rob Christ of His glory. Some of our people hearing that I read that book, and conversed with the man who lent it, took it for granted that I was prejudiced against the doctrine of perfection and those that preached it. They told this to my band-leader. I went one Sunday morning, as usual, at seven o'clock, to meet my band, and found myself in a peaceable frame of mind. No sooner did the leader begin to pray, than he cried, "Lord, never suffer us to be prejudiced against Thy servants, seeing that Thy will is our sanctification!" I found, as it were, something in me, saying, "He means me." When he spoke his experience, he expressed the same thing; on which I said, "Is it me you mean?" He answered, "What I have said, I have said." I then found violent prejudice against him. My peace was gone. My soul was torn in pieces within me. I told one of our people as we went home, how my leader had behaved towards me. I did not regard breaking the band-rules, because I was determined never to meet in a band any more. I had no rest: though I could not give up my confidence in God, nevertheless my corruptions boiled so within me that I could have fought with a feather.

On Friday night we had preaching. I went to it like one possessed with a legion of devils. Afterwards the bands met, and the preacher earnestly exhorted all present to look for the second blessing, and insisted that it might be received. "Now," thought I, "if there is such a thing, none can stand in more need of it than I do." But the enemy suggested, "There are those that have known God several years, and have not attained; and shalt thou be delivered who hast been justified only a few

months?" Immediately I found power to resist the temptation, and said within myself, "God is not tied to time." No sooner did that thought pass through my heart, than the power of God seized me. I found I could not resist, and therefore turned myself over upon the seat; I cannot express how I was. I found such a travail in my soul, as if it would burst from the body. I continued so, till I was motionless and insensible for a season. But as I was coming to myself, I found such an emptying, and then such a heaven of love springing up in my soul, as I had never felt before; with an application of these blessed words, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." If possible, I could have put my band-leader into my heart. The book I mentioned before had pleased me so well that I had given orders to him that lent it me, to buy me one of them. But no sooner did God work this change in my soul, than I found an utter aversion to it, and told the man, "You must not buy it; for I shall never read it more."

In the year 1768 I was sent to call sinners to repentance, in and about the city of Carlisle. Here I was much persecuted; but, blessed be God, He delivered me out of the hands of all my enemies, and gave me several seals to my ministry.

Thus far Mr. Wilkinson lived to write himself. One of his fellow-labourers added what follows:—

My acquaintance with Mr. Wilkinson was very short. The first time I ever saw him was a little

above three years ago. The next time was after last Bristol Conference. He was there appointed to labour with me in and about Grimsby.

When we met in the Circuit, we were both in health; but the day before our Quarterly Meeting I was taken very ill of a fever: however, the next morning I ventured to set out for the meeting; but, having fifteen miles to ride, it was with much difficulty I got safe thither. And then I was unable to attend either the lovefeast or the watch-night.

But I shall never forget the prayer Mr. Wilkinson put up for me at the close of the lovefeast, that the Lord would spare me a little longer, and raise me up again to labour in His vineyard. His prayer pierced the heavens: the power of God came down upon the people like a torrent of rain. They were so affected that they wept and rejoiced abundantly. Immediately I shared with them, although I was not in the same room: the Divine presence broke my heart to pieces. My soul overflowed with love, and my eyes with tears. I know not that I was ever so powerfully and suddenly affected under any person's prayer, except on the day I was converted to God. Immediately I had faith to believe the Lord would raise me up again, and for several minutes it appeared to me as if I was perfectly well. The next day I went along with him to Louth; and in that time we had a good deal of conversation together, which chiefly turned upon these two points, namely, predestination and Christian perfection.

He told me, with sorrow of heart, how often he had been grieved for the immense hurt that he had seen done by the preaching of unconditional predestination, as it blocked up the way of repentance.

weakened the foundation of diligence, damped the fervour of believers after holiness, and had a tendency to destroy it root and branch. He likewise very warmly expressed his love for Bible-holiness; saying, it was the delight of his soul to press after it himself, and to enforce it upon others; and that while he was doing this, the Lord blessed him most in his labours, and shone clearest upon the work He had wrought in his own soul. He signified to me that the Lord had circumcised his heart to love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength; and I believe, at that time, he was full of faith and the Holy Ghost.

He was truly meek, and lowly of heart, and little, and mean, and vile in his own eyes. I found my mind amazingly united to him, for the time we were together, like the soul of David and his beloved Jonathan. I loved him much for the mind of Christ I saw in him, and for his zeal for the Lord of Hosts. We parted at Louth; and I endeavoured, with the fever upon me, to creep along to Tedford to preach: but it was with much trouble I went through my discourse. That night the fever seized upon me more violently, and never left me for near a month. About a week after, Mr. Wilkinson came to Tedford to see me. We spent about three hours together very profitably. We then both of us prayed, and commended each other to God.

A few days after we parted, he was taken ill of the fever, and could not rest until he came to his wife at Grimsby; where he lay ill for four or five weeks. He then appeared to be recovering fast, and walked about a little; but he suddenly relapsed, and was carried off in about a week.

He bore all his afflictions with great patience, fre-

quently lifting up his heart to God, and repeating these words: "But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held His steps, His way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips; I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job xxiii.) When he perceived that he should die, he exhorted his wife to cast all her care upon the Lord, and encouraged her to believe that His grace was sufficient for her.

He then prayed for her and his two children; earnestly entreating the Lord to protect them in this troublesome world, and to supply all their wants.

He next prayed fervently for Mr. Wesley, that the presence of the Lord might continue with him all his days, and crown him at last with eternal glory.

He then remembered his three fellow-labourers in the Circuit, praying that the Redeemer would assist us in the great work; that He would go forth-with, and bless the labours of all the preachers, and that the kingdom of the Redeemer might spread unto the ends of the earth, and preserve them until they join the church triumphant.

In the night season he had a severe conflict with Satan, and his spirit wrestled with God in prayer. Yea, he was in an agony, as he said afterwards. At last the tempter fled; and he seemed as if he was admitted into heaven, to converse with God, with angels and saints.

He suddenly awaked his wife, (who was in the same room,) and said, "Thou hast been sleeping, but I have been in heaven. O, what has the Lord discovered to me this night! O the glory of God! the glory of God and heaven! The celestial city!

the New Jerusalem! O the lovely beauty! the happiness of paradise! God is all love; He is nothing but love. O, help me to praise Him! O, help me to praise Him! I shall praise Him for ever! I shall praise Him for ever!" So Robert Wilkinson departed this life in peace, on Friday, December 8th, about eleven o'clock, 1780.

It seemed a great providence that he died on the market-day, when a number of friends out of the country were present, who quickly published, in their little villages, that a funeral sermon would be preached on Sunday. The house was well filled, and the Lord made it a solemn time. I believe there was scarcely a dry eye in the congregation.

I have often taken notice, how the Lord makes the triumphant death of good men a peculiar blessing to His children who are left behind: so it was at this time. The people of God were remarkably blessed in hearing the dying testimony of our dear friend. The worldly people and the backsliders were cut to the heart.

At the conclusion of the sermon I dropped these words: "Earth has lost, and heaven has gained, a child of God. Let us pray the Lord to add another to the church militant." We did so; and the Lord answered our prayer, by setting a young man's soul at liberty, so that he went from the solemn place, as the shepherds from the heavenly vision, blessing, praising, and glorifying God.

The minister of the parish behaved exceedingly kind: he came to the preaching-house, stayed awhile, and then walked slowly before the corpse, whilst the people sung a hymn of praise. When we arrived at the church, one of our friends asked him if we might sing a hymn of praise. He answered, "I have no

objection: I am against nothing that is good." So we sung those awful words,—

"Thee we adore, eternal Name,
And humbly own to Thee,
How feeble is our mortal frame,
What dying worms we be!"

The people sang lustily and with a solemn spirit; for the Divine presence was with us all the way through, and in such a manner as I never knew before at any funeral.

When the minister read these words, "Not to be sorry as men without hope," Mrs. Wilkinson, who hung upon my arm with her two little babes, was so overwhelmed with the presence of God, that she could not refrain from crying out, "Sorry, no! Glory be to God! glory be to God! Glory, and praise, and blessing, be ascribed unto God, for ever and ever!" Her spirit seemed as if it was ready to launch into the eternal world, to be with Jesus and her happy husband. A remarkable power fell on all that could hear her; so that the people were melted into tears; some of sorrow, others of joy.

From this time the work of God began to revive at Grimsby, and the country people caught the fire, and carried it along with them into their little societies.

Robert Wilkinson was, as you have described him, "an Israelite indeed; a man of faith and prayer; who, having been a pattern of all good works, died in the full triumph of faith." O, what a blessing to live and die a Christian! May I also be a follower of those who "through faith and patience inherit the promises!" In my life, and at my death, may I be like him!

G. S.

September 20th, 1781.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. BENJAMIN RHODES.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

April 20th, 1779.

REV. SIR,

I WAS born at Kexborough, a little town in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1743. My father, who taught a school in the town, had the external parts of religion before he heard the Methodists: he used family and private prayer, read the Scriptures and other books of devotion in his family daily, and frequently instructed, exhorted, and catechised his children. By this discipline we were restrained from many evils, taught the fear of the Lord, and, in some measure, to seek that which is good.

Before I was eleven years of age, I went with my father to Birstal to hear Mr. Whitefield. I found my soul deeply affected under the word. At first I had a kind of terror; but before the sermon was ended, my heart was melted into tenderness, and sweetly drawn after God: yet a few months after

this, a propensity to foolish pleasures sprung up in my breast, and drew me into childish vanities.

At about twelve years of age I took a walk one evening into a large, thick wood, not far from the town. I left the path, and wandered in the thickest part of it, till I was entirely lost. Night began to close in upon me, and I did not know which way to turn my face towards home. It soon became quite dark: I then gave over rambling, and intended to remain there till the next morning, when I hoped to find my way out. In this situation I found my former impressions begin to return with much sweetness. My soul was drawn out in prayer; I was deeply sensible of the presence of God; my heart overflowed with penitential tenderness; and, under a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and of His goodness, mercy, and love, I sang and prayed with much fervour: yea, I was so thankful that the Lord had found me, while lost in a wood, that I would not for all the world have missed such an opportunity.

My parents, being alarmed at my not returning at the usual time, made great search for me. At last, my father came to the wood-side, and called aloud: I soon heard him, and following the sound, got out about midnight, without receiving any hurt.

The impressions I received this night lasted for some time; but youthful pleasures again prevailed, and drew me into such follies as grieved the Spirit of God, and greatly damped the fervour of my own spirit.

I was chiefly at home with my father till I was sixteen years of age, and mostly attended the school. I had great opportunities of improvement, both in learning and religion; but my volatile spirit did not love study and confinement: the love of pleasure

prevailed over my judgment; and, though my vain enjoyments were rendered very painful from my father's displeasure, and the terrors of my conscience, yet my attachments to them made me careless about things profitable, and prevented such an improvement as might have been made.

About this time my father put me out to learn some branches in the wool and the worsted business. His chief motive in placing me where he did was that I might be under the means of grace: and though I attended the preaching constantly, heartily believed the doctrine, and often felt the power of the word; yet I was so much taken up with pleasure, and those companions who led me from seriousness and religion, that at last, as with a flood, I was carried away; not indeed into gross sins, (for I do not remember that I ever swore one oath, or took God's name into my mouth upon a light occasion,) but into foolish company, gaiety, and youthful vanities. But in my foolish career I was like the troubled sea: the more I sought to please myself in vanity, the further I was from it; and sometimes my conscience terrified me almost to distraction; so that I have been afraid to sleep, lest I should awake in endless misery. All this time my understanding was clearly informed respecting the nature and the necessity of religion; and I felt great reverence for it. None can tell the struggles I had in my breast, between my conscience and my inclinations: sometimes one and sometimes the other was obeyed. I knew I could not be truly religious without parting with all that is contrary to seriousness, and without having the bent of my mind turned from vanity to God. Neither did I make any pretensions

to it, as I had not a fixed determination to forsake all, and follow Christ.

When I was about nineteen, I thought myself most miserable. I was quite sick of vanity, and so burdened with a sense of it on my conscience, that I could not find rest day or night. I then began to think on the mercy and goodness of God, which had been so abundantly made manifest to me in times past; but my follies so reproached me, that I was ashamed to look up. I then found a willingness to be saved in God's way; and, groaning in my bondage, prayed, "Turn Thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned." The Lord heard, and turned the whole desire of my heart from everything earthly unto Himself: it was then I found such relentings of soul, as I had not done before. Nothing affected me more than a sense of God's long-suffering, mercy, and goodness; that, after I had so often refused His calls, quenched His Spirit, and abused His blessings, yet I no sooner cried to Him than He heard, and delivered me from the servitude of sin, and encouraged me to hope in His mercy. My whole heart was then given up to Him. Prayer was now my chief business; and I often sang very feelingly:—

" Wealth and honour I disdain,
Earthly comforts all are vain;
These can never satisfy;
Give me Christ, or else I die."

In this state I continued several months, desiring and seeking God alone, without much interruption or temptation. About this time I was invited to a private meeting among the Calvinists. The minister spoke much of the power of imagination, and what a deluded people the Methodists were, and warned his flock not to come near them. I was greatly

bewildered and terrified at this. I began to suspect that my call to religion, and the change in my mind, were only delusion. I was also tempted to think, that all who professed religion were like myself. I was carried so far as to doubt of Christianity, and of the being of a God! I thought the greatest part of the world consisted of Heathens, Mahometans, and Jews; the Popish religion is almost as idolatrous as the Pagan; there are but few Protestant Christians, and but very few of these who act consistently with the doctrines of Christianity. These thoughts increased my infidelity till I was almost distracted. Darkness and horror sat brooding upon my mind, together with a gloomy fear of falling into nothing, or worse than nothing, at death. I hated life, and, though tempted, was yet afraid to venture on death. I had no power to pray: I only wished for a dark retreat, where I might converse with darkness and misery alone.

In this "horrible pit" I groaned for deliverance, yet was not sensible of a Deliverer near. At last I found power to look up; my heart began to melt, and the spirit of prayer returned: I cried, and the Lord heard. The darkness began to disperse; hope again visited my soul: yea, it increased, attended with a degree of confidence in God, till the "Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings." I beheld the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world;" and had such a sense of the sufficiency of His atonement, as I had not had before, with a conviction that I was interested therein. All my fears and doubts disappeared: I found the peace of God: His love was manifested to me, which caused me to love Him again. Joy and gratitude now so possessed my heart, that my

cup was ready to run over; and my soul, being freed from all its bondage, said, "God is become my salvation." Now my infidel fears were gone, and the truth of Christianity appeared to me in the clearest light. Not only my understanding saw, but all my powers felt, the truth thereof. I had a deep sense of a present God, whom I approached in the name of Jesus, with reverential awe, confidence, gratitude, and love, and could call Him "my God and my all."

In this happy season, my joy frequently prevented my sleep, while my soul was taken up with Him who is altogether lovely, and in ecstasies of joy in the stillness of the night I often sang my great Deliverer's praise. All things earthly appeared so empty, that I thought nothing here below worth a thought, only as it tended to promote my eternal interest: I only desired grace and glory. I then began to conclude, that my adversaries were quite overthrown; and that I had only to march forward, and take possession of the "land of promise:" I therefore pressed forward rejoicing for some months. At length, through unwatchfulness, and giving way to levity, my comforts greatly diminished, till, imperceptibly, I was again drawn into a wilderness state; and though I was diligent in the outward means of grace, yet I had lost the pleasing sensations which I formerly had found therein.

About this time I was strongly beset with some Calvinists, who used all the arguments in their power to draw me into the belief of their doctrines. I was almost persuaded to believe "final perseverance," only I did not see how I could separate it from "reprobation:" I wished to do it, but could not. I thought, if these must necessarily be saved,

on whom God begins a good work, then the rest must as necessarily be damned, on whom He does not begin it. When I considered "final perseverance," as it related to myself only, it appeared so pleasant that I hardly could resist it: but when I considered it as a branch of the doctrines of unconditional "election and reprobation," it gave me pain, and inclined me to renounce it. Reprobation appeared to me quite contrary to the whole purport of Scripture,—the nature of a holy, just, and merciful God,—the state of man as an accountable creature,—and to a future judgment, where rewards and punishments will be dispensed to every man according to his works. However, my lot being cast among those who held the decrees, I frequently heard the chief arguments that are used in support thereof. Sometimes their arguments appeared so plausible, that I began to stagger in my mind, and to be much distressed: I then made it the subject of prayer; and one night, after I had been wrestling with God, that He would lead me into all truth, I dreamed of reading a passage of Scripture which gave me entire satisfaction. I could not remember the passage in the morning; but on opening my Bible, the first words I cast my eyes upon were, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.) Such light and conviction attended the words, as removed every doubt of God's loving all mankind; and from that day to this my mind has been established in the comfortable doctrines of universal redemption.

But though I was fixed as to doctrines, yet I did not find, as formerly, such a sweet intercourse with

heaven ; and foolish desires began to arise again, which formerly seemed to be dead. I had also very powerful temptations ; and earthly attachments prevailed too far upon my affections. Yet the hand of the Lord was over me for good, and preserved me from the dangers to which I was exposed.

When I was about the age of twenty-one, I heard Mr. Jaco preach on Hebrews xii. 1. He insisted on the necessity of laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, in order to our running the Christian race. I saw the necessity of it, and was again stirred up ; and the Lord once more set me at liberty from every entanglement. In a short time my former comforts returned with more solidity, and my understanding was abundantly matured in the knowledge of the Christian warfare.

About this time I was desired to lead several classes. I found those meetings were both solemn and profitable to myself and others. The first quarter several found a sense of forgiveness, and others were greatly stirred up. I was also desired to speak a word of exhortation : this also I complied with. I now soon found work enough, as many came to hear what I had got to say. Indeed, I have often stood up to speak to a large congregation, when I would rather have undergone almost any punishment. However, the Lord gave me strength according to my day ; for when I have begun to speak, my fear and trembling were quite taken away, and I frequently found much freedom in speaking : and I have reason to believe that the Lord rendered my weak labours useful ; for some were turned from their wickedness to God, some converted, and many stirred up to press forward. On a Sunday I usually preached at several neigh-

bouring towns, and sometimes visited them on the week-days.

As the Conference drew near, Mr. Jaco asked me if I was willing to travel, suppose there should be a want of preachers. I found much reluctancy to this, arising from a sense of my insufficiency; and I had such a love to the people where I was, that the thought of leaving them gave me great pain; yet I desired not to be governed by my own inclination, but by the providence of God.

At the Conference held at Leeds, 1766, I was desired to take a Circuit; to which I consented. I set out in the twenty-third year of my age, and went into the Norwich Circuit, where I stayed two years. The Lord was pleased to own my poor labours here in the conviction and conversion of several souls.

At the Conference in London, 1767, I was taken into full Connexion. My second Circuit was in Oxfordshire, where I stayed two years. In that time the work of the Lord was enlarged abundantly.

My next remove was to Canterbury, where I stayed one year. While I was here, my father died. Since then I have been much in the north, to be near my mother and sisters.

My next remove was into Lincolnshire, where I stayed two years among a poor people, who received the word gladly. We got into some new places, and in other respects God gave me some fruit of my labours. From hence I went to Hull and Scarborough, where I stayed three years. Here we raised several new societies, and in several parts of the Circuit the work prospered.

I next went to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I stayed only one year. Here I had many profitable

opportunities, and had also the pleasure of seeing some fruit of my labours. From hence I went to Alnwick and Dunbar, where I laboured one year. I had much riding here; but being amongst a people whom I loved, and with whom I laboured comfortably, I thought little of fatigues.

I am now in Sussex and Kent. Since I came into these parts, I have lost a sister and mother, who, I believe, are both gone after my father into Abraham's bosom: but I am left behind, almost the only person out of a large family. But how long or how short my day may be I leave to unerring wisdom: one only concern ought to possess me,—to employ it as I ought; then, at the close of it, I also shall sleep in peace, and, after a short absence, be with my dear departed friends.

“Thrice happy meeting!

Nor time, nor death, shall ever part us more.”

I am thankful to God that He ever called me to this blessed work; as by this means I have gained more strength to my own soul; have been of some use to my fellow-creatures; have had an opportunity of knowing a little of the world, and of the state of religion amongst the Methodists and others: all which I judge to be more than a reward for what I have done and suffered.

At present, there is nothing so precious to me as religion and the cause of God; and my principal desire is to fill up my little sphere, that when I am called to give an account, I may do it with joy, and not with sorrow.

I am, Rev. Sir,
Your affectionate son in the Gospel,
BENJAMIN RHODES.

IN the Minutes of Conference for the year 1816 the following character is given of Mr. Rhodes:—

THIS venerable and excellent man was brought to the knowledge of God, and His truth, at an early period of life. When he was yet a child, the Father of lights revealed His Son in the heart of His servant, and made him happy in His love.

Having received a Divine call to the work of the ministry, he willingly devoted all his talents to the duties of his holy calling; and it pleased the great Head of the church, not only to qualify him for these duties, but to bless him with many seals to his ministry.

For about half a century he was engaged in calling sinners to repentance; during which time he always possessed the confidence of his brethren, and was highly respected as a faithful and laborious servant of the Lord. During the last years of his life he resided with his family at Margate; where he was always found ready for any part of his Master's work of which he was capable.

Mr. Rhodes was a man of great simplicity and integrity of mind; he was warmly and invariably attached to the whole economy of Methodism. His life was a practical explication of his faith; and his character, both in the church and the world, was creditable to himself, and honourable to religion.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS TENNANT.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

July 1st, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I WAS born in London, in the year 1741. My father came from Norfolk, and my mother from Cambridgeshire. They were very honest and well-meaning persons, and constantly attended the service of the church; but I fear knew not the power of religion. Shortly after they came to London they saw Mr. Whitefield preaching to a great multitude in Moorfields. As they had never seen or heard of him before, they stared with great astonishment. What he said made some impression on them, and they frequently heard him, till he left England; but when he went to Georgia, they were at a loss what to do, till one told them they might hear the same kind of preaching at the Foundery. My father went, and heard you, sir: but the first time he did not understand it; but after awhile he understood you

very well; and both he and my mother were truly awakened. Presently after they were admitted into the society, which they counted a very great privilege, and continued therein, serving God and His people, as long as they lived.

As to myself, I had convictions of sin from my childhood. But as I grew up, I endeavoured to get rid of them; which was partly effected; but I could not shake off the fear of death. I sometimes tried to comfort myself with the thought, that death was only my common lot among the rest of mankind; but if I apprehended it near, I was terrified beyond expression. One Sunday afternoon, when I had sauntered up and down St. James's Park, I went into Westminster Abbey, not for devotion, but to pass away time. I had not been there long before I was struck with an horrible dread! My sins were set in array against me! I hastened out of the church, but did not expect to get home alive; I seemed ready to expire, and was to my own apprehension

“Condemn'd the second death to feel,
Arrested by the pains of hell!”

I cried to the Lord in an agony of fear, who heard me from His holy place, and came to my deliverance. My dread and horror were in a measure removed; and I resolved never more to spend any part of the Sabbath in merely seeking my own pleasure.

When I was about fourteen years of age, my father put me out to a person who feared God. While I was with him, I had frequent visitations from God, and felt the drawings of His blessed Spirit, though I too often resisted them. However, I became more serious; which was increased by two severe fits of illness. Before this I had been exceedingly fond of

going to plays, yet never went without a dread upon my spirit. When I was there, I always seemed as one treading on forbidden ground; and particularly one night, when two persons were trampled to death, in crowding up the same passage which I had but just before got up.

I also took great delight in reading plays; for which purpose I collected a number of the best I could meet with, and often pleased myself and my companions with the repetition of some of the most striking passages in them. But I found nothing of this kind could give me any real happiness, and was constrained to say, "This also is vanity! It will not satisfy an immortal spirit; it will not ease a wounded mind." At last, from a full conviction of this, I committed all my plays to the flames, and determined to spend my leisure hours in reading more profitable books. I therefore read your "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion" with much satisfaction. Yet on reading the former part of your sermon entitled "The Almost Christian," I was quite distressed, and ready to give up all hope. I thought, "His Almost Christian leaves me so far behind, that to be quite a Christian seems impossible to me." But when I had turned over the next leaf, and saw what was necessary to make a true Christian, namely, "the love of God," my heart was softened, and my hopes revived. I said, "This is religion, this is Christianity indeed; and this, Lord, is the very thing I want! O, give me this love, and I shall be satisfied, and all within me shall bless Thy name!"

Frequently, when I have heard you preach, I thought you appeared as with a sword drawn in your hand, with which you cleft me asunder. At such

times the word was indeed quick and powerful, piercing and wounding my inmost soul; it was indeed a discerner of the thoughts and intents of my heart; but it still left me without comfort to bewail my wretched condition. Thus I went on, till my burden grew too heavy to be borne. I mourned all the day long. My distress was very great, and I wanted to speak to some experienced person; but, being naturally very close and reserved, I could not break through. I was glad indeed when one asked me to go to a meeting of Christian friends; but when I came to the door, and heard them singing, I had such an idea both of their goodness, and of my own unworthiness, that I durst not presume to go in; therefore I walked back again with a heavy heart.

Some time after this I joined the society; but for a long while durst not venture to go to the Lord's table. One Sunday I was determined to go; but when I approached, my heart failed me, and I went back without receiving; but, through the distress of my mind, my legs were scarcely able to support me, and, being filled with fear, guilt, and shame, I trembled exceedingly. However, at last, as a poor, weary, heavy-laden sinner, who had nothing to plead, but, "God be merciful to me for Christ's sake," I ventured to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. Just before I came up to the table, these words were deeply impressed upon my mind,—

"Cover'd with Thy blood we are:
Find a part that does not arm,
And strike the sinner there."

This inspired me with such courage, that I kneeled down with a strong hope I should not be a victim to God's justice, but a monument of His mercy; and when Dr. J. gave me the bread and wine, I was

enabled to believe that Christ died for me, and was filled with peace in the Holy Ghost. I rose from the table with a glad heart, greatly rejoicing in God my Saviour.

After this I walked in the loving fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. I found great sweetness in the word; yea, and in all the other means of grace. Indeed some of the most delightful moments of my whole life were spent in waiting upon God in His ordinances. I enjoyed great tranquillity of spirit, being delivered from my guilty, tormenting fears of death and hell. When I laid my body down to rest, I could repose my soul as on the bosom of Jesus, and say,—

"What, if death my sleep invade,
Shall I be of death afraid?
Whilst encircled by Thine arm,
Death may strike, but cannot harm.

"What, if beams of opening day
Shine around my breathless clay?
Brighter visions from on high
Shall regale my mental eye."

Meantime I found an earnest desire to live to the glory of God, together with much love to precious souls. And hence I found a desire of preaching; on mentioning which, I was desired to go with a friend who occasionally exhorted a few people at a house in St. George's Fields. At his request I ventured to speak a few words to them, and found freedom of spirit.

About this time I had a great desire to travel with you, sir. When you was informed of it, you was so kind as to consent to it. So I had the pleasure of accompanying you from March, 1770, to the August following, when I was admitted on trial as

a travelling preacher, and appointed for the Newcastle Circuit.

I believe very few, if any, of our preachers set out with so little courage: the depression of spirit I laboured under was nearly insupportable; and if it had not been for the affection and tenderness of my good friend Mr. Jaco, who was at that time the assistant, I must have sunk under the burden. The loving, sensible people I laboured among were also very kind to me, and bore with me; though I was with them in weakness, fear, and much trembling.

The next Conference I was sent into Lincolnshire; where I met with many trials, having both the inward and outward cross to bear. Afterwards I was near a year among the poor, loving people at Colchester; and I hope my labour was not in vain.

From thence I went to Bradford in Yorkshire, and the year following to Newcastle again. I had now a little more courage than when I was there before; and, I trust, was more useful to the people: and from that time I have travelled with more satisfaction than ever I did before.

At present I find a thankful heart for the mercies of a gracious God, and desire to devote myself unreservedly to His service. Indeed it is comfortable to me to reflect, that "God is love;" that "He was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself;" that Christ Jesus "gave Himself a ransom for all;" that "He tasted death for every man;" that "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world;" and I have often wondered how any man of sense, who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, can use arguments in opposition to this. But as to the dispute concerning these points, I very seldom mention it in public; never, unless my subject naturally leads to

it; and even then, I do it in as few and as calm words as possible: for I am quite convinced, that a thousand exclamations and assertions, be they ever so vehemently delivered, will not amount to one argument on either side the question. But what I wish above all things is, that I may increase in the knowledge and love of God, and be more holy, happy, and useful every day of my life: nevertheless, I am truly thankful for, and profited by, the superior talents and labours of any of my brethren who are more particularly called to explain and defend these glorious truths which I have always believed.

Upon the whole, as far as I know of myself, I love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and if He is pleased to continue to use, in any degree, me, His weak, unworthy creature, I shall be unfeignedly thankful, and hope to give Him all the praise in time and in eternity.

I am, Rev. and dear Sir, as ever,

Your dutiful son and servant,

THOMAS TENNANT.

IN the Minutes of Conference for the year 1793 the following character is given of Mr. Tennant:—

THOMAS TENNANT; a man of a meek and quiet spirit. He travelled for twenty-two years, and was everywhere received as an acceptable preacher. His sufferings for many years were great, arising from a deep nervous disorder. As he lived to God, so he died in peace.

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN ALLEN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

September, 1779.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I WAS born at Chapel-in-the-Frith, Derbyshire, in June, 1737. My parents were honest labouring people, and brought up eight children, all yet living; most of them convinced of sin, and some converted to God. As my father was a Churchman, and my mother a Presbyterian, I went sometimes to church, sometimes to the meeting: and frequently I went with my mother to hear the Methodists, among whom I had several relations. I stood in awe of these; and when I was in their company behaved more seriously than at other times.

From eight or ten years of age I had many serious thoughts; especially when it thundered and lightened, or when I heard a passing-bell; and I was always preserved from swearing, drunkenness, and other scandalous sins. But I delighted much in

dancing, singing, and cards, and in making everyone merry wherever I was.

When I was about sixteen, I was deeply convinced of sin, by reading the eighth chapter of Jeremiah ; particularly these words, " The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." I concluded that my day of grace was past, and that there remained for me nothing but judgment and fiery indignation. The thought of this almost broke my heart, and caused me to weep bitterly before the Lord. But after a time I grew as careless as before, and continued so for above five years, only with intervals of seriousness, and many good desires, but none brought to good effect. My great hindrance was, the being joined with a society of singers. I found I could not stay with them, and be religious ; so I thought I would give religion up for the present : but at times I was of all men most miserable.

Another affliction soon came upon me. I was from a child very fond of my mother, and often thought I could not bear to live after her. In March, 1759, she died. This awakened me once more. I resolved to break off at once, and to seek God with all my heart. My companions, thinking I had only left them through grief, and would soon return, said nothing to me at first ; but by and by, when they heard I was turned Methodist, they set upon me in earnest. But by the grace of God I withstood all, and came out from among them.

At that time we had no preaching near us. I often went twelve miles on a Sunday to hear a sermon. But in September following, Mr. Crab came to preach at Chinley, and joined a few together in a society : I willingly cast in my lot among them, and, blessed be God, have never repented of it.

About Christmas I got Mr. John Oliver to preach at my father's house. We had no more preaching there for some time. However, three of us continued to meet together, to sing and pray, and converse. One evening, when we were met, I was in such distress, that I concluded I could live no longer, if God did not pardon my sins. Presently I heard a voice, saying, "It is I: be not afraid." I looked about to see who it was that spoke; but could see no one. However, my mind was much refreshed for a season, and I remained between hope and fear till we met again. As I was then crying to the Lord, those words came strongly to me, "The Lord is at hand! The Lord is at hand!" But neither did the impression made by this continue long. Soon after I gave way to trifling, and so grieved the Holy Spirit, that I hardly dared to look up, or hope for mercy. But while I was overwhelmed, and feebly crying out, "I am oppressed; Lord, undertake for me;" these words were applied, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Put thy trust in God." This comforted me much: But still I could not rest without a clear sense of my being reconciled to God. I was one day crying to God for this, and wrestling with Him in prayer, when I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and was constrained to cry out,

"For sinners like me
He bled on the tree.

Ah, who would not love such a Saviour as Thee?"

Now I could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." My soul was filled with peace, and I rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God. Soon after we began to have constant preaching; and a

little class was formed, of which I was appointed the leader. I loved meeting in class; but I trembled at being the leader: nevertheless, I took up my cross. And many times it proved a blessing, both to the people and to my own soul. •

Before this I had many thoughts about preaching; but I saw not how it could be, as I was deeply sensible of my own ignorance. This I often laid before the Lord, praying Him to give me full proof if it was His will. Meanwhile I sometimes gave a word of exhortation; which it pleased God to make useful. This encouraged me to speak again; but it was with fear and trembling; and I often thought, "If I get this time over, I will speak no more." Thus I went on for more than twelve months, before I attempted to take a text. After I had exhorted and preached about four years, I was, in the year 1766, received on trial as a travelling preacher. And, although my heart was in the work, yet was I frequently tempted to give it up; but God suffered me not. He again and again refreshed my soul therein, and encouraged me to go on by letting me see the fruit of my labours.

Some years after, being stationed in London, I was seized with an illness, which held me eight months. In this affliction I was often low-spirited, which laid me open to many temptations. When I got a little better, I resolved to preach again. The first time I was to preach, I went a little before the time to meditate in the fields. As I was walking on the grass, I was, I know not how, thrown down with such force, that I was much bruised, and my clothes ill torn. Hitherto could Satan go, and no farther.

Three or four years after, I had thoughts of altering my condition. Upon this I consulted my best

friends. I gave myself to prayer; and, after much deliberation, married Miss Jane Westal, of which I never had cause to repent. We lived together in perfect harmony, till, on the 30th of June last, she was seized with the epidemic distemper. At first we were not apprehensive it was the fever; though she herself judged it was, and believed it was the messenger of death. As her fever increased, and her end drew nearer, she was happier and happier. She said very little to me about dying, because she was sensible it would give me more affliction than I should be well able to bear. But to others she spoke freely concerning it; and with the greatest composure she said, "I shall soon be

'Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.'"

The Tuesday before her death she seemed to be quite transported with joy. When I went up stairs, I found her with heaven in her look, repeating the following lines:—

"The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! My ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O grave, where is thy victory?
And where, O death, thy sting?"

On Friday she seemed like one from above. There was in her such a spirit of love and gratitude as I never saw before in any creature. She thanked and blessed every one that did the least thing for her. She often prayed that God would reward me for all my kindness to her; and broke out, "My Lord! my God! my Father! my Husband! my Friend! I long to see Thee!" When she could

speak no longer, I desired her, if her soul was happy, to lift up her hand. This she immediately did; and soon after fell asleep.

By her death I lost one of the best of wives, and my two small children one of the best of mothers. In many things she was a pattern to the flock of Christ; particularly in plainness of dress and of speech, in neatness, in every relative duty, as well as in private prayer. This I never remember her to have omitted three times a day. Had any told me beforehand, how I should be able to bear her death, I could not have believed it. None but God can tell what I felt. But I did not feel a murmuring thought, nor ever for one moment imagine that God had dealt hardly with me. I could still say,

“Thy medicine puts me to great smart;
Thou wound’st me in the tenderest part!
But ’t is with a design to cure:
I must, I will the touch endure:
All that I prize below is gone;
Yet, Father, still Thy will be done!”

I am now more convinced than ever, that religion does not turn us into stocks or stones; that it is intended, not to root out, but to regulate, our passions; and that there may be the most sensible feelings, with full resignation to the will of God. This, I bless God, is my own experience. I have long been telling the people that God would give suffering grace for suffering times; and I am now a living proof of it. As I have endeavoured to water others, God hath watered me again; and not as waters that fail, but as a fountain of water springing up within my soul.

Let the Lord now “do with me as seemeth Him good.”

"I'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

Hitherto the Lord has been my helper; and He is the same for ever. So far as I know my own heart, I have no desire but to live to His glory, and to promote, so far as I am able, the interest of my Redeemer. My greatest grief is, that I do not love God more, and that I have not more of heaven in my heart.

I bless God, I have for twenty years been steady in my principles, having never, that I know of, however I was tempted, wavered for one hour. I have read many things on the other side of the question, but was not in the least shaken. I still believe that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all; and that, by the grace of God, He tasted death for every man, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

If this imperfect account may be of use to any, it will answer the end that is wished for by,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your son in the Gospel,

JOHN ALLEN.

THE following account of Mr. Allen was given by the Conference in the year 1810 :—

JOHN ALLEN; a man of good report among all who knew him, and a judicious, faithful, and affectionate preacher. He began his itinerant labours in the year 1766; and continued to travel with very great approbation and considerable success, till the year

1799 ; when, by various infirmities, he was obliged to retire from public life, and was appointed a supernumerary in Liverpool. Here he preached occasionally that Gospel which had long been the joy and delight of his heart ; and, though he had often to struggle with much weakness, used cheerfully to say, "I love my Master and His work." Of late he was unable either to preach, write, or walk ; but would not relinquish his attendance on the ordinances of God, while any means could be contrived to carry him to the Lord's house. The means of grace were to the last the proper element of his soul. Meekness, gentleness, simplicity, resignation, and humility were Christian tempers which he possessed in a high degree ; and one who was long and intimately acquainted with him testifies, that for many years he never was observed to be ruffled with pride or anger. Ten days previous to his departure from this world, in preparing to come to the chapel, he had a fall, which occasioned much pain in his side. After this his strength rapidly declined ; and on Tuesday, February 20th, 1810, in the seventy-third year of his age, the weary wheels of life stood still. In the morning of that day, though unable to converse much, he was remarkably recollected ; and when asked by a friend, "Have you strong confidence in God?" he replied, "Yes."

THE LIFE
OF
MR. JOHN PRITCHARD.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in December, 1746, at Arthbay, in the county of Meath, in Ireland. My father was a Protestant; my mother was of the Romish persuasion; and both were zealous for their religion.

My father brought up his children according to the best light he had. One evening, while I was playing with the other boys, he heard me swear. On this he took me by the hand, led me into the house, laid me on his knee, and whipped me till the blood came. From that hour to this I believe I never swore one profane oath.

While very young, I was put to school. While learning to read, I met with these words, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." The impression they made on me never wore off, till I knew experimentally what they meant.

Whilst I was a lad I prayed earnestly night and morning. I also prayed at other times, when my mind was drawn out after God, as it very sensibly was from the age of five or six, to that of fourteen.

During these years I could weep and pray for hours together.

About this time I was much awakened by a horrid murder committed near Castle-Pollard, in the county of Westmeath. The manner was nearly as follows:—Three men, Gerroughty, Hughes, and Murray, with two women, went one dark and tempestuous night about eleven o'clock to the house of one Mr. Nangle. Upon their entering, they found the cook-maid, kitchen-maid, and scullion-boy, whom they killed on the spot. From thence they went up stairs, entered the chamber where the master and mistress lay, and, finding them asleep, Gerroughty with an iron bar of an inch square made a blow at Mr. Nangle's right arm, which broke it in two. On this Mrs. Nangle rushed out of the room; and, in the hurry, the candle which Murray held went out, and he fainted away; for Murray was compelled by the other two to go with them. Hughes ran down stairs to light the candle, whilst Gerroughty and Mr. Nangle were engaged with each other; and although his arm was broken, he got his antagonist under him; and had but Mrs. Nangle stayed to assist him, he would probably have conquered them. All this time, Gerroughty was calling upon Hughes to come and help him; who, coming at last, stabbed Mr. Nangle nine times before he left his hold. Gerroughty then dispatched him with a blow. Their next work was to go in pursuit of Mrs. Nangle; whom they found with the child and nurse in the nursery. They cut hers and the nurse's throat. Then they came to the child, about five years old, who cried out in the Irish tongue, "James! James!" (Hughes had lately been a servant in the family; and his mother nursed Mr. Nangle and him

at the same time, so that the child knew him well :) "surely you will not kill me as you have killed my mamma!" The words so penetrated the savage's heart, that he would have spared him; but Gerroughy would not, saying, "What he says to-day, he can say to-morrow." So he caught him by the legs, and dashed his head against the wall. Returning to the maid, and striking her with the iron bar, he left her, as he thought, for dead. After this they went in search of the men-servants, but found none.

They had now only to plunder the house, handing out what they found to the women that waited to receive the plunder; after which they set the house on fire. At that time there was a gentleman, a relation to the family, lying in one of the upper apartments; but they did not think it worth their while to lose any time upon him, concluding he would be consumed in the flames: and so he must have been but for a greyhound that was in the same room with him; which, when the fire came toward it, got upon his master, who was fast asleep, and tore off the bed-clothes from him. When he awoke, he climbed up to the window, and sat there till help should come.

Soon after, a servant that was abroad, returning home, found the house in flames. He concluded the family were asleep; and, getting in through one of the windows, ran up stairs to his master's chamber; but, on opening the door and going in, fell over him, while he lay gasping out his last. Hence he was convinced the house was not accidentally set on fire.

On this he carried his master out, and laid him against the wall, and went in search of his mistress. Not finding her in her own bed, he went to the

nursery, where he found three of them in a deplorable condition ; but the child and the maid were not quite dead : these he carried out also. He then went to seek the maids, but in vain, being murdered in the kitchen, which was by this time almost in ashes. He then ran better than a mile to awaken the adjacent village. When he returned he found the good old man sitting in the window, whom he just saved by reaching him a ladder. All this time the murderers were in the garden.

The next day, the country being alarmed, the inhabitants came together ; found the house in ruins ; the master and mistress dead ; the child half dead, but who yet lived thirty hours after. The two maids and the kitchen-boy were dug out of the ruins : the nurse only was in possibility of recovery. But God would not suffer the wicked to go unpunished. For Hughes got drunk on the very day of the funeral, and wanting to be rude with the servant of the public-house, on his offering her a purse of money, she told her mistress, who sent a young man to the room who knew him. On this he strove to escape, but was quickly taken, and carried before Lord Longford ; to whom, after a while, he related the whole affair, and impeached his accomplices, who were soon apprehended, and sent to Mullingar, and at the next assizes were condemned, and hung in chains near the place where the murder was committed. This awful event made a deep impression on my mind, and was a means of stirring me up to seek the Lord with greater earnestness.

I was about fifteen when Providence led me to Longford. My father, being a builder, was employed by the lord of the place to carry on some build-ings for him. It was here I first knew the Method-

ists, of whom I took particular notice : their going to church constantly pleased me much, being myself regular in attending all the ordinances. Yet I was often uneasy ; which I strove to cure by doing something more. But afterwards, by going into loose company, I was soon led away from my former exercise of prayer and receiving the sacrament. In a while I could walk the streets at night, and run from one excess of folly to another. Yet I could find no rest. There was a bitter herb mingled with all my sweets. Nay, the concern of my mind still increased, and every method I took to satisfy it proved abortive.

About this time I was sent to the Academy for Drawing, in Dublin ; and through it I got a new set of acquaintances, which gave me a disrelish to everything in the country : so that nothing would now do but a city-life ; and yet I was not happy.

From my earliest years I had a strong inclination to travel. I took the first opportunity, and, with some more wild than myself, I left my native soil, without acquainting father or mother, sister or brother, with my intentions, and set off for London. I was not long here before the Almighty found me out again. Being visited with a violent fever, I came to myself, and said, " Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son." I now found myself in a strange land, and among a strange people. I knew none save one man, a distant relation, who proved a friend indeed. The Lord's hand was heavy on me : my body, soul, and substance felt the weight thereof. He cut off every comfort at a stroke. He smote me with a fever, a consumption, and a guilty conscience. My sickness continued so long as not to leave me a

groat in the world, and hardly a morsel to eat. For three weeks I had to live upon twopence a day, and this at a time when just risen out of a fever. I could say, in the words of Job, "Terrors are turned upon me; they pursue my soul as the wind, and my welfare passes away as a cloud. My bones are pierced within me, and my spirit is poured out. I go mourning without the sun; a brother to the beasts of the field." In this condition I sought unto the Lord, but had no answer. He smote me with astonishment; He scared me and terrified me with dreams, and made the night to come upon me at noon, and my sun to go down in the morning of my life; He covered me with shame, and caused me to cry out, "A man may bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear? I am vile; I am oppressed: Lord, undertake for me!"

I now saw my whole heart polluted, my understanding darkened, my will corrupted, and destitute of its native freedom. I therefore made my bed in sorrow, and watered it with my tears. The multitude of sins, whereof my whole life was full, the heinousness of them, I feared would one day be laid open before Him that is to judge the quick and dead. My confusion increased as I dwelt upon what God had done to bring me to heaven, and what I had done to oppose His gracious design. I wept to see His goodness which I had abused. The great day of trial appeared full in view; and that the rich man could not then save himself by his riches, nor the mighty man by his might, nor the crafty man by his wiles; only the just shall stand before Him with joy. The just appeared to me as sitting upon their thrones, condemning me by their holy lives; together with many of those who had committed equal sins with

myself; because they knew their time of repentance, which I had despised and rejected: the just Judge pronouncing the sentence, "Go, ye cursed;" which sentence must remain, when once passed, unalterable.

This appeared most terrible of all; and, I trust, profitable, in that it led me to the fear of the Lord.

I now appeared as one waking out of a dream in which I continued all my days. My sins stared me in the face: the consideration of my estrangement from and opposition to God, was set home on my mind; so that I was tried, cast, and condemned in my own breast. Under this sore burden and distress of mind I called upon the Lord. I also inquired after the Christians. I went to church, and to the Dissenters of almost all kinds, but still found no peace. I then went to the people called Quakers, and under their testimony I found a little consolation. At last I dropped into the old Foundery, in Moorfields, and heard a man who told me all that was in my heart. And now it might be said of me, as Milton said of our first parents,—

"Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood,
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breathed
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and wing'd for heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory."

I now, both night and morning, sat under a powerful and faithful ministry, which led me gradually through the hidden mazes of corrupt nature into grace. I found it instrumental in turning me to Christ, the true Shepherd, the Lawgiver coming out of Sion, that turns away ungodliness from Jacob. I

soon found my understanding enlightened; my judgment informed how to find favour with God. But my sense of sin was so great, I could not think of finding mercy so soon: years, yea, my whole life, I thought was too little to repent and weep before I could with any face expect pardon. Thus I often rejected the counsel of God. I would not be yet healed, until I heard Mr. Jaco preach from these words, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." O, how did my heart bound! It was like the hart upon the mountain. "My chains fell off at a stroke! my soul was free; and found redemption, Lord, in Thee!" My wilderness soul became a pleasant field, and my desert heart like the garden of the Lord; the promises flowed in upon me. I found in consequence of this great tenderness of mind, and much peace and joy through believing. I now began to taste the sweets of religion; and was enabled to pity those who were curious in their inquiries after many things but that the most needful to know. What I counted gain before, I now counted loss; for, doubtless, I esteemed all things but as dung, in comparison of Christ and Him crucified. My daily study and contrivance was, how I might manifest my love and thankfulness to Him who had called me out of darkness into His marvellous light. My every meal was a kind of sacrament: the food I ate was life to my soul, as well as marrow to my bones. I found a double sweetness in all I possessed. In private the Lord poured His blessing upon me. He washed away my tears when weeping at the throne of grace, and called me His child; enabling me comfortably to look up, and call Him Father. I read His word daily, and wept over it. I looked into my heart, (for fear a plant of

unbelief should spring up,) and beheld the lineaments of God's image, the transcript of His laws, the harmony of His gifts and graces, the witness, earnest, and foretaste of eternal joys.

Soon after this I met with many things to try my patience; but none of them moved me. I had my room robbed one evening while I was at the Foundery; but I could say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I rejoiced exceedingly in that they could not rob me of Christ, and the privileges of the Gospel. Immediately I joined the society; and the first night of meeting the class, I thought it the greatest emblem of heaven of any meeting I was ever in. My soul was much humbled under a deep sense of my great unworthiness, and of being permitted to sit and hear such as feared God relate His lovingkindness to them. I was now united to a happy people, who walked (the general part of them) in the light of God's countenance, and counted it all joy at any time to suffer for His name's sake; where discipline was for walls and bulwarks, and where His doctrine dropped as the rain, and His words distilled as the dew. Yet I saw the need of watching and praying, that I might maintain the life and power of God in my soul. I saw that the best way to be free was to lay the axe at the root of the tree, and to spare neither root nor branch, but cut asunder all the cords which would tie the soul to earth; to deny every temper, passion, and gratification that had the least tendency to indulge the evil nature; seeking, intending, and desiring nothing during my long or short stay in this world, but to find in Christ what I lost in Adam,—holiness of heart and heavenly tempers,

which become those who are called by grace to be children of God and heirs of glory.

When you* appointed me for a class-leader, and would not excuse me from undertaking that office, I gave myself up to do all the good in my power to those you appointed to meet with me. Soon after this I got a band of single men. It increased every month, until I was forced to divide it into four bands. But being unwilling to be parted, we appointed to meet together once a month, and to make it a prayer-meeting. In these meetings God was with us of a truth. We had a heaven among us, and a paradise within us! We lived as the Christians of old, having all things common; so that few, if any, counted anything that he possessed his own.

It is true we had some wildfire among us, which made Mr. John Pawson fearful of us. Mr. Allen also seemed fearful of us likewise, though he loved us much, and strengthened us both in public and private.

For between three and four years this blessed work went on among near a hundred young men, besides what were at the west end of the town; until one and another of them went into the highways and hedges to be more useful to the world.

It is with pleasure I call those days to remembrance; when we ran our circle of duty both to God and our neighbour, visiting sick-beds, hospitals, gaols, workhouses, and garrets. O, how did we then harmoniously stem the tide; swim against the stream of evil examples; and with labour and strife, self-

* The following part of this account is addressed to the Rev. John Wesley.

denial and patience, fortitude and resolution, watchfulness and diligence, resist every temptation to forsake God and His ways !

Young men have the greatest opportunities for usefulness, before they get entangled in the cares of the world : if they do not, they are never likely to make any progress in the best way. This is the seed-time for usefulness. O that all young persons, male and female, who read these lines may bestir themselves, under a sense of the importance of this great work, to all assiduity while they are in the vigour of life !

Having spent five years thus with this happy people in London, you sent Mr. R. to inquire if I would accompany you to Ireland. After a few moments' consideration, I gladly accepted of your offer. Accordingly we left London the first Sunday in March, 1770. When we got over to Ireland, I went to see my relations and friends. After staying some days with my parents, I overtook you at Coolly-Lough. From this place we travelled round the kingdom, and in July arrived safe in Dublin. During this journey, I found my mind enlarged towards God and man. Many desires were kindled for the furtherance of the Gospel. At times I purposed to give a word of exhortation ; but my heart failed me, which brought on me much distress, and sore conflicts with the enemy. I then fasted, and also prayed that God would remove the burden ; but to no purpose ; for it grew more and more heavy upon me. The amazing value of souls weighed much with me towards putting in my mite for their salvation ; especially when I considered that the everlasting God Himself came down, not to reign over princes, but to wear out His life in the form of a

servant. These thoughts made me cry out, "Lord, what is a kingdom, what is the earth, with all the planetary worlds, compared to one soul?" During this time, in which my soul hung in suspense between heaven and earth, the following lines were often brought to my mind:—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so Divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!"

After travelling from March to September, I found I could not continue to travel with you in your long and painful journeys. I therefore purposed to return to business again. On consulting you, your answer was, that I was not called to be a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water; that the Lord had something else for me to do; but for the present you would have me go to Kingswood. I accordingly went; and while I was there, my heart was drawn out in prayer for the whole world. My soul grasped the habitable globe. I felt as if I could spend my life in cries and tears for Zion's welfare. During my stay here, I came to a resolution to try the Lord; to put Him to it, and to see what He had for me to do in this world. I was conscious that though all Christians were not called to be public speakers, yet all are called to be a common blessing, a public good, and thereby prove themselves the children of their heavenly Father, who is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all His works. But as I was uncertain how to act, I thought that by exercising the little ability I had, I should in time know the will of God concerning me. I therefore gave myself up to do all possible good, and to extend my usefulness to all around. Accordingly, I resorted to prayer-

meetings among the colliers in different parts of the wood, and exhorted the schoolboys daily ; which often proved a means of quickening me in the ways of righteousness.

After some time I began to preach at Keynsham, and found much encouragement to proceed, until I fell into reasoning upon the necessity of human qualifications ; such as a knowledge of the languages, and episcopal ordination. But I made this matter of prayer, and in a short time met with Mr. Baxter's "Answer to Mr. Johnston's Four Arguments" for an uninterrupted succession in the ministry, and the absolute necessity of episcopal ordination ; in which answer Baxter refers his readers to the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, for a description of the persons qualified to speak in public : which was a grateful relief to my mind.

After being at Kingswood some time, I received a letter from you, desiring me to go immediately into the Wiltshire Circuit. This threw me into a fever, and brought on me much trouble of mind ; seeing I was weak in grace and in gifts, and young in years, as well as of a shy disposition. However, I ventured. But though God gave me the hearts of the people in general, and I had for my Assistant one of the best of men, Mr. Richard Bourke, (now in Abraham's bosom,) yet my fears and sorrows so increased, that my appetite failed, my sleep departed, and my body so wasted, that I became a very skeleton. Nevertheless I went on, hoping it might be better with me hereafter.

August, 1772, I was received into full connexion at Leeds, and appointed for Norwich. Here I stayed but one week, and could not think of staying any longer, from a sense of my unfitness to preach

to so large a congregation. During my stay I was led to expose Antinomianism, which prevailed much here, to the great scandal of the Gospel. Many of my hearers were much enraged against personal holiness, and him that preached it; and at one time in particular they ran down the gallery-stairs like madmen, crying out, "False doctrine! false doctrine!" I cannot say I was ever before so much inclined to speak against the popular doctrines of the day as at that time. And it since appeared there was need of it then; for some of those very persons became the most abandoned wretches in their lives afterwards.

When I came to London I knew not what to do. My mind was like a troubled sea, tossed upon every wave of temptation; not through guilt or condemnation, but on account of my not preaching against sin. At last I ventured again, in consequence of Mr. Mather's advice, and went into Sussex. Here I saw my need of wisdom; that as a servant of God I might heal divisions, and unite in one those that fear God. I was now afraid to turn my thoughts towards home, and therefore gave myself to reading, meditation, and prayer, that my profiting might appear to all.

Towards the close of this year I was much tried for myself and others, and went to the London Conference in 1773 with a heavy heart. My former resolutions were now broken, and I concluded I was not fit to stand up and speak for God. But dear Mr. Charles Perronet, knowing my trials, spoke to me in an affectionate manner, and encouraged me all he could to persevere.

After some days spent in Conference, I saw the zeal of many of the preachers who had borne the burden and heat of the day, and the desire which

appeared in all to promote the Redeemer's glory. On this I saw my trials altogether unworthy of notice. Never did the things of sense appear so inconsiderable as at present. On this the zeal of the Lord of hosts kindled afresh; and in this day of almighty power my mind was lightened of its load, and made willing to go through honour and dishonour for the sake of Christ. Fain would I have been excused aforetime from this work; but now I believed the Lord laid this burden on me, and therefore I durst not throw it off. I beheld the dear servants of my Master, who, through many dangers and labours, were still willing to spread the saving truth far and near; and strongly desired to bear a part with them; and saw myself happy that my gracious Lord assigned me a place among them.

Finding a desire to visit my native country, I no sooner asked but you granted me my request by appointing me for the Newry Circuit. Here we gathered in some hundreds from the barren mountains. In Lisburn we built a house, and added seventy souls to the society.

In 1774 I was stationed for Charlemount; where I found the Lord had blessed the labours of His servants the year before. Here also He blessed His people, and increased their number this year also.

The first half year I met with great discouragements: the person appointed to labour with me had married a gay young lady, and consequently could not come. My horse also died, and I was left alone without a man to help me, or a horse to carry me. As a great fear rested on me lest the work should be hindered through these things, I cried to God in the anguish of my spirit, and poured forth my complaints and tears to Him that called me to the

work. However, I laboured to fasten every stake, and strengthen every cord; and as much as in me lay, to build up the tabernacle of David wherever it was fallen; and in doing this I continued travelling on foot the greatest part of the year.

Such was the love I bore for truth, that I forgot everything else in comparison of it. I longed for the Spirit to shine out upon all my ways, and sought it with great diligence: I also sought an increase of grace, well knowing this to be the most likely means of making me useful in my day and generation; and was fully determined that whatever gifts or graces God gave me, they should all be used in His service, and spent for His glory.

July, 1775, we met you in Conference at Dublin, when I was appointed for the Athlone Circuit. I was thankful to a kind Providence for giving me an opportunity of seeing and being with my first acquaintances in religion at Longford; who first showed me the way of worshipping God in the spirit. But we had no remarkable work among us this year, only that we lived in peace, and that the God of peace was with us; which we esteemed a very great blessing.

August, 1776, I was sent to Londonderry. In this Circuit we had an increase. When I went to visit Coleraine, we had not one in society; but after preaching in the streets a few evenings we joined together about sixty souls, got a room in the barracks, and continued to go there regularly from that time.

This year we lost a most valuable friend in Londonderry, namely, Mr. John Smith, who was a pattern to all that believed; who for years stemmed the tide, and swam against the stream of corrupt

customs and sinful examples ; and who now enjoys the crown prepared for him, and sees Him whom his soul loved.

Our Circuit was large, and painful to travel ; having to go to Coleraine on the one hand, and to the dreary county of Donegal on the other ; and round by Lough-Derg to Lisleen : to which the Papists resort from all parts of Ireland, England, and sometimes from foreign countries, to expiate their sins, as they imagine.

In the depth of winter I was taken very ill at Mrs. Johnson's. Great was the love, and multiplied were the favours, I received from her. For all the time I was ill at her house she was to me as an affectionate mother and a tender nurse. Her example increased my desires for holiness, and wrought in me a greater degree of zeal to promote the interest of our Saviour wherever I came.

In this visitation I found the truth of those words, "Blessed is the man whom God scourgeth, and teacheth out of His law." Scourging and teaching I observed generally go together. I found it was a means of improving my grace, and an evidence that I was not a bastard, but a son. I also found that it tended to wean me from the world, and to prepare me for a greater reward in my Father's kingdom.

July, 1777, I returned to England, after spending four years in Ireland ; and three out of the four in the north ; during which time my mother died, which left me more free to preach Christ wherever the Lord pointed out my way. I came to Dublin, and embarked for Liverpool, in company with Mr. John Hampson, Mr. Floyd, and others. But the high winds which are frequent in St. George's Channel, and which are fatal to many vessels in the passage

from Ireland to this kingdom, were near proving so to us. For we were driven on the coast of North Wales in the night; but, by the blessing of God, with some difficulty, we landed at Beaumaris early in the morning; and about the third day we arrived safe at Bristol, which was the day before the Conference began.

During this meeting I experienced much self-abasement; being conscious of my unworthiness of the Connexion I was in. Every one there appeared as a bright light compared to me. However, I was appointed for Bristol that year. When I came to preach to such a great body of people, my soul fainted within me. But the Lord strengthened me, and gave me to see that nothing of consequence could be achieved with a faint heart, nor great matters undertaken without resolution. Accordingly, I applied myself to reading, meditation, and prayer; and found a blessing in so doing.

In August, 1778, being appointed for Northampton Circuit, I left the dear people of Bristol with reluctance, and came to London, the place from which I first set out to travel. With tears I surveyed the interval of time since I betook myself to the highways and hedges, and changed my quiet habitation for a public one, and the silent shades for troubled seas. Since then I have not been without such difficulties as unavoidably attend us. And though I had not been wanting to count the cost, yet I have often been like the widowed dove when I thought upon the time, the place, and people among whom I drew the warmest breath after heaven. But surely the time will come when we shall for ever enjoy the company of those most dear to us.

After a few days I set off for Northampton, where I soon found the preaching of the Cross but coolly received by the inhabitants in general ; where Christ is much talked of, but I fear is kept at too great a distance. There is much said of outward things, but little of the inward washing of regeneration and universal obedience. Many speak great swelling words about imputed righteousness, promising to others liberty, while they themselves are the servants of sin. I was much distressed to see the Antinomian ministers and doctrines carry the multitude after them ; which made me cry, "How long, O Lord God, holy and true, will it be ere Thou wilt come, and maintain Thy own cause?"

In the winter my horse fell ill ; and I being poor, (for a Methodist preacher is likely so to be as long as he lives,) and the people poor also, I travelled the winter and spring quarters on foot, about twelve hundred miles. Meantime, whatsoever I parted with on earth was amply made up to me in Christ and His people. My love to them was so great, that I could willingly have died to promote their welfare. Through this love I could keep nothing as my own, but freely communicated what I had to others. And thus, through perseverance under the cross, I found the truth of those words, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day."

August, 1779, I went to Lynn Circuit, in Norfolk. This took in Colchester, the Fens of Cambridge, and all along the coast to Wells, Walsingham, and Fakenham : in which towns, and many of the villages, we gathered many into societies, who were careless and wicked before. But in the towns along the sea-coast we met with much trouble, espe-

cially from the smugglers. We applied to the justices, who were more afraid of them than we were; and who told us, if we would preach on Sundays, they would protect us, but not on other days.

I was much blessed with two faithful colleagues, who counted not their lives dear, so they might win souls to Christ. Yet in Lynn we did but little good; which was principally owing to some imprudent professors, by whom such as were feebly inquiring after truth were hindered from going forward in the good way, and from pressing into the kingdom of Christ.

August, 1780, I was stationed at Taunton, in Somersetshire, and went thither in much heaviness of spirit. I had for my fellow-labourer James Skinner, who travelled with me in Norfolk the year before, to the great edification of many; but his poor state of health would not admit of his continuing long in the work. Through much affliction he weathered out this year, and part of the next in Nottingham; and then returned home.

I found here but little of that warm and lively affection for the Gospel which I had known in other parts. Here also I was seized with an ague of a long continuance, which exercised my spirits much. I sought for submission to the rod, but found not so much of it as I could wish. However, I found a measure of the love of God, which at last enabled me to break through all difficulties.

My dear Mrs. P—, and a few others, proved kind to me. May the God whom I serve in the Gospel of His Son reward them! May the angel of His presence give them victory in this life, and a crown of glory in the next!

We visited some new places, and endeavoured to break up fresh ground ; but to little purpose. This is one of the most fruitful counties in England for good eating and drinking ; but most unfruitful as to religion. However, there are a few resolutely bold to stop the tide, and swim against the stream of evil examples. But among the few in society, I knew but one that had attained the whole mind that was in Christ ; namely, J—— S——, of N——, who walks worthy of his profession, and is a light in a dark place. This year, with assistance from the Conference, we paid off a debt of near two hundred pounds which was on the Taunton house.

August, 1781, from Leeds Conference, I came back again to Taunton, and had for my fellow-traveller Mr. Boone. But we both were very ill of the ague, which hindered our usefulness. I used the cold bath, and took bark in abundance ; I walked and rode ; I tried electricity : but the most effectual remedy I could find was the cobweb-pills.

August, 1782, I went to the London Conference ; but was so ill I could not attend. From London, after taking a tour round Norfolk, and from thence to Bristol, I went to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in hopes the north-country air would prove effectual for the recovery of my health. It did so till spring, and then I had the ague about ten weeks more. Here I found an old experienced people who have stood many storms. During my illness, which was at Alnwick, I found many friends, who spared neither cost nor pains to make me comfortable. Here I could spend my days cheerfully among a loving, tender, and affectionate people, who received my testimony with thankfulness and love.

On the 21st of July, 1783, I was married to

Hannah Day, of East-Brent, in the county of Somerset; for which I hope to bless God to all eternity.

August, 1783, I was appointed for North Wilts: the first Circuit I ever laboured in. We soon had a fair prospect; particularly at Allington, Castle-Carey, Bradford, and Brumham, near the Devizes.

In Allington we joined about forty members this year; and our good friend Mr. John Horner built us a comfortable preaching-house in Castle-Carey, where but a few years ago they threw Mr. Samuel Wells into a pond for preaching. At Bradford, the work of God broke out by degrees, and the society increased, to which but few had been added for many years. At Trowbridge, God was at work on many hearts; but in a more silent and deep manner than is common at the first. O, what a glorious Gospel is this! And how much do I owe to a kind Providence, who has called me, a sinner, to publish it! O, what reason have I for thankfulness on this occasion! And how ought I to be humbled under a sense of His goodness to such a weak and ignorant creature! I find God increasing my desires after Himself, and exciting in my heart a warm zeal for His cause. But truly a sense of the importance of my work is sometimes more than I am able to bear.

July, 1784, I went to the Leeds Conference; but it proved to me a very sorrowful one, such as I trust I shall never see again. From this I came back to Wilts Circuit, where I am at present. The work which last year began has broken out into a glorious flame; so that, before the year is out, I expect to see some hundreds in connexion, and happy in the love of Jesus.

Having thus, sir, given you a brief account of

myself, and of the great goodness of God in bringing me to Himself, and sending me out into the highways and hedges to call sinners to repentance, and who hath thus far stood by me, I now praise His holy name, and pray that, as He has hitherto blessed us as a people, He may continue His lovingkindness towards us, and bless us more and more. I also pray that, as we believed in Him, we may ever walk in Him, and be able and willing to testify of Him to the world, and never return more unto folly.

O, sir, let us remember with gratitude and deep humility what God has wrought among us from the beginning! When were we hungry, and He fed us not; sick, and He came not to us? When we went out without purse or scrip, lacked we anything really necessary? When were our calamities so great, that we found no consolation in Him? Can we not to this day say, Hitherto He hath helped us? Can we not read the witness, the seal, the earnest of His Spirit, and foretastes of joys to come, written on our hearts? O that He may remain amongst us; and that it may be our constant desire to glorify Him! which some have neglected to do. May the words of our Lord to His disciples be ever sounding in our ears: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I overcame, and am set down on My Father's throne!" O, may we all be like the messenger returning to the Athenians in the day of battle, who just cried, "We are conquerors!" and then died.

JOHN PRITCHARD.

COLEFORD, *January 17th, 1785.*

THE following character of Mr. Pritchard was given by the Methodist Conference, in the year 1814:—

JOHN PRITCHARD, aged seventy-one; a native of the county of Meath, in Ireland. Early in life he united himself with the Methodists, and became experimentally acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus. His conversion was sound. His knowledge of the pardoning love of God was clear and distinct. Soon after he began his Christian course, the Spirit itself bore witness with his spirit that he was a child of God; and he earnestly panted after a full conformity to the Divine image. In the year 1771 he began to preach; and in the same year Mr. Wesley sent him into the Wiltshire Circuit. He continued to travel till the Conference in 1802, when, at the request of his brethren, he became governor of Kingswood School. In that situation he remained till the year 1807; when, under growing infirmities, he retired from it, and lived in Bristol until he was called to his eternal rest.

Mr. Pritchard was a warm advocate for the doctrines of the Gospel as held by the Methodists. He preached with zeal and energy a free, full, and present salvation, to be obtained by faith in Christ; and towards the close of his life often expressed to his intimate friends a concern for the perpetuation of sound doctrine, genuine Christian experience, holy living, and godly discipline, among the Methodists.

THE LIFE

OF

MR. WILLIAM ADAMS.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

WILLIAM ADAMS was born in Fairfax county, in the State of Virginia, on the 23d of July, 1759. From his infancy he was naturally inclined to passion and other evil tempers. But the Spirit of God very early impressed his mind with serious reflections concerning the salvation of his soul. When he was about fourteen years of age, he had frequent opportunities of hearing the Methodists preach. I am not certain in what manner the Lord first awakened him ; whether it was suddenly, or in a more gradual manner. However, when he was thoroughly awakened, he was greatly broken down, and most deeply convinced. For about two years he was in distress, under a sense of the wrath of God ; and by his countenance, tears, frequent groans, gestures, and, indeed, by his whole behaviour, discovered that he felt a hell in his soul.

During this time, he missed no opportunity of hearing the word ; and early and late he poured out his soul to God in private prayer. He fre-

quently retired into the fields and woods, and arose in the middle of the night, to seek rest for his troubled soul. He had at this time a power over outward sin, and walked circumspectly in attending all the ordinances of God; yet he still knew this would not suffice, except his past sins were blotted out, and his soul quickened and made alive by faith in Jesus Christ.

He was tempted to think that all his prayers and tears were in vain; that he was a hypocrite; that God would never have mercy on him; and that it was now too late for him to expect it. He opened his mind to the preachers with whom he conversed, and begged their advice and prayers. They sympathized with him in his distress, and exhorted him to persevere in seeking the Lord. Some of his friends, indeed, dreaded that his unbelieving fears would drive him to despair. Yet he determined, by the grace of God, to lie at the feet of Jesus, and, if he perished, to perish crying out for mercy. He had, at the same time, the conversion of others, especially his relations and neighbours, much at heart; and he earnestly prayed for the success of the Gospel among all people.

About the 1st of March, 1775, as he was one evening pouring out his soul in private, he felt in a moment such a change that his weeping and mourning were turned into joy in the Lord. His countenance, his behaviour, his prayers, his praises, all testified that the Lord had looked upon him in mercy, and had turned his darkness into light, and his mourning into songs of joy. He could now say, with David, "Come hither, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul." And again, "As far as the east is from the

west, so far hath He separated my sins from me." And as the Lord was at this time pouring out His Spirit on the people in the neighbourhood in a glorious manner, this young man went about day and night to pray among the people, and praised his God who had done so great things for him.

He walked humbly before the Lord; and though he found much of His presence, yet he frequently complained of his barrenness, and expressed a want of more and more of the life of God. There was so much of the mind of Christ in him, that it seemed to the preachers and others that God had some work for him to do: therefore, though he was very young, he was appointed to meet with and assist a few persons near his father's, who were resolved to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. They received him gladly; and it pleased God to bless his labour of love among them. After a little time, it was impressed on his mind that he must, in a more public manner, warn his fellow-sinners to fly from the wrath to come. Accordingly, he first exhorted in the society; and afterwards, with the advice of the preachers, he did it in public; enforcing all he said by his holy life and humble conversation. He was not deterred from attending at the house of prayer by a little sickness, by heat or cold, or by wet and dark nights; for it pained him exceedingly to let one hour of his time pass by unimproved.

Sometime in the summer of 1771 the Lord convinced him more deeply of the inward corruption of his heart. He was now all athirst for a heart perfectly devoted to God; crying out,

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone."

And on the 17th of August in that year he believed the Lord had saved him from all his inbred sin ; and felt what he could not fully express. For some time he had no doubt of this work being wrought in him ; and, indeed, none who knew him could disbelieve him, for the tree was known by its fruit. But the enemy of souls soon robbed him in a measure of his confidence respecting this work, so that he came short of his gracious privilege.

In the winter of 1778 he felt a great desire to preach the word, and to give himself wholly to the work of the ministry. It was thought best that he should continue where he was till the ensuing Conference ; and then, if God should permit, that he should go out into the work. But it pleased Providence to make a way for him sooner ; and after many struggles in his own breast, and some outward opposition, he left his parents and friends, cheerfully commending them to God, and the word of His grace.

After staying some time among the people where he had been sent to labour, he went to the Conference, and was received on trial as a travelling preacher. He was much attached to the old Methodist plan, and grieved when any seemed inclined in any degree to deviate from it. He was appointed, in conjunction with two others, to labour in the Baltimore Circuit. Here he soon found some with whom he could take sweet counsel ; men who were on full stretch for all the mind that was in Christ ; and not a few who could testify that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all unrighteousness.

He soon found the work of God reviving in his soul ; and got so established in grace, that he had a

constant sense of the indwelling Spirit of God, and was enabled to live nearer to the Lord than ever. He now experienced that he could rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. All who truly loved God could easily perceive what spirit he was of; and were astonished to see a person so young blest with such gifts, and yet with still greater grace. When they heard this stripling conversing in private and preaching in public, they sat at his feet gladly; and were constrained to say, "Surely out of the mouths of babes God doth ordain praise!"

In this Circuit he spent about six months, with much satisfaction to his own mind, and profit to others. At the last Quarterly Meeting he attended, his words in the lovefeast seemed to flow from a heart glowing with the love of God, and affected all who were present. He declared that the Lord had (since he came to that Circuit) taken away every doubt of his being perfected in love; and had given him a confidence which was stronger than death and all the powers of darkness. He well knew the happiness and advantages of conversing with such Christians as had experienced a deliverance from indwelling sin, and were daily pressing after a growth in grace. Therefore he would fain have continued here longer with those who had been such an unspeakable blessing to his soul. But as it did not seem convenient, he did not object to go to any place where God in His providence should appoint him: nay, he would have willingly gone to the ends of the earth, (if called thereunto,) so he might be a means of bringing sinners to the bleeding side of his crucified Lord.

He evidently desired to spend his little all in

labouring for the conversion of his fellow-men, hoping that the time was drawing nigh when the Lord would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and spread the knowledge of Himself over the whole earth. His capacious soul never said, "It is enough;" though he was thankful for the least mercy, knowing it was infinitely more than he deserved. The more the Gospel spread, the more he rejoiced, and prayed that the house of the Lord might soon be established on the top of the mountains, and that all people would flow unto it: for he believed that Christ tasted death for every man; and that all, through Him, might come to God and be eternally saved. He was so universal a lover of mankind, that for a time it was difficult to convince him that he had any enemies: yet, before his death, when he became more acquainted with the world, and with the spirit that rules in the children of disobedience, he saw that "whoever will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution."

November 11th, 1779, he was taken with an ague. On the Sunday following he went to hear a funeral sermon preached by one of his brethren. He exhorted at the grave, but complained of being ill. On Wednesday, 17th, there being a prayer-meeting in the neighbourhood, he had a desire to go, but doubted whether it was prudent. However, after pausing awhile, he said, "It may be the last time;" and then went. On Thursday his disorder seemed to increase; but he was truly resigned, desiring that the Lord would do with him as seemed Him good. The language of his heart still was, "Father, glorify Thy Name." On Sunday, the 21st, he came down stairs, and sung and prayed with the family, intending to preach in

the evening; but he was not able. At night some friends came to see him; to whom he testified that for the last six months he had enjoyed more of the life of God in his soul than he could express.

On Monday and Tuesday his disorder still increased. Talking with one of his sisters, he related to her some sore conflicts which he had in his illness; but the Lord bruised Satan under his feet, so that he did not give place to that accuser of the brethren. On Wednesday he talked but little. At the class-meeting in the evening, when some friends asked him how he was, he replied, "Poorly in body; but my soul is full of love."

On Sunday, the 28th, in the morning, he lifted up his hands, and continued for some time in praying to and blessing God. At night many friends, with whom he had had sweet communion, came to see him. He knew them perfectly well; and, holding out his trembling hand to each, he rejoiced to see them once more. When one of them said, "I hope you are not afraid to die," he answered, "No; blessed be God! I trust ere long to be gathered into Abraham's bosom." On Tuesday, 30th, in the morning, he asked his sister to pray with him. When she gave out,

"Corruption, earth, and worms
Shall but refine this flesh;
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh," &c.,—

he sang aloud with great devotion; and while she was praying with him, he frequently repeated "Amen" with such a tone as expressed the happy state of his soul, which appeared ripened for its last remove; gasping, panting, and longing to be lost in that eternity of love which Christ has pur-

chased with His precious blood. When his mother asked him if he was very ill, he replied, "I do not feel much pain ; for it seems as if the Lord bore all for me." Soon after he looked up in his sister's face, and said, "Sister, help me to sing." She replied that she was afraid it would hurt his throat, which was very sore during his whole sickness. But though it was with the greatest difficulty that he could swallow a drop of water, yet he would discourse of the things of God frequently with much ease.

December 1st, after praying in his bed, as if in family prayer, he said, "I thought I was out of doors ; and such a light shone round about me, and I felt so happy, that I thought the Lord was going to remove me that moment." At night he sung,

"Ashamed I sigh, and inly mourn,
That I so late to Thee did turn."

Then he added, "I cannot tell half the happiness I have had since I have been lying here." On Thursday he seemed considerably worse, and sighed, as if he knew what he had to go through ; but said, with great composure, "I do not mind it : I know that I love Jesus."

"Jesus, the Name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease ;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears ;
'Tis life, and health, and peace."

On Friday his feet were cold, and he appeared to have all the symptoms of death. Whilst the family were standing around him, his father asked him if he should go to prayer. This was always pleasing to him ; and whilst four or five prayed, he repeated "Amen" to the last. When one who had

sat up with him was about to take her leave, he asked her if she knew that God for Christ's sake had blotted out her sins. When she replied, she hoped so; he exhorted her not to deceive herself, but to cry to God till she *knew* it. A negro of his father's coming in to take his leave, who was seeking the kingdom of heaven, being asked if he knew him, he replied, "Yes; and I trust I shall know him in Abraham's bosom."

When his sister asked whether he had a greater desire to live than to die, he said he was so happy at times that he had rather die; but desired that the will of God should be done. He then added, "Are you willing to part with me?" His mother replied, "Yes; I trust God will make us willing." Whilst his little brother stood by crying, he said to him, "Perhaps you may be the last that will follow me, and you are not prepared. Therefore pray to God to have mercy upon a poor young stripling; to save you from lightness and laughter, and to bring you to reign with Him in glory through Jesus Christ our Lord." When his sister said, "I hope you see now that you have not followed a cunningly-devised fable," he replied, "I see it: but the devil would once have persuaded me that I had deceived myself; but since that time I have been so happy, that all the devils in hell could not make me doubt." Observing a young woman sitting weeping, he fixed his eyes upon her; and when she was called to the bedside he said, "Do not be frightened; but seek that faith which sweetly works by love, and purifies the heart."

His father asking him if he knew him, he said, "Yes;" and putting his arm round his neck, he kissed him, and said, "Live near to God." He

then kissed his mother, and said, "Farewell, mamma. Ere long we shall meet to part no more." He lay still for some time, though his lips still moved. He often said, "Come, Lord! welcome! hallelujah!" At last, whilst he remained perfectly sensible, and whilst his heart seemed raised to God in praises, he resigned his soul to Him, without a sigh or a groan, on December 3d, 1779, in the twenty-first year of his age.

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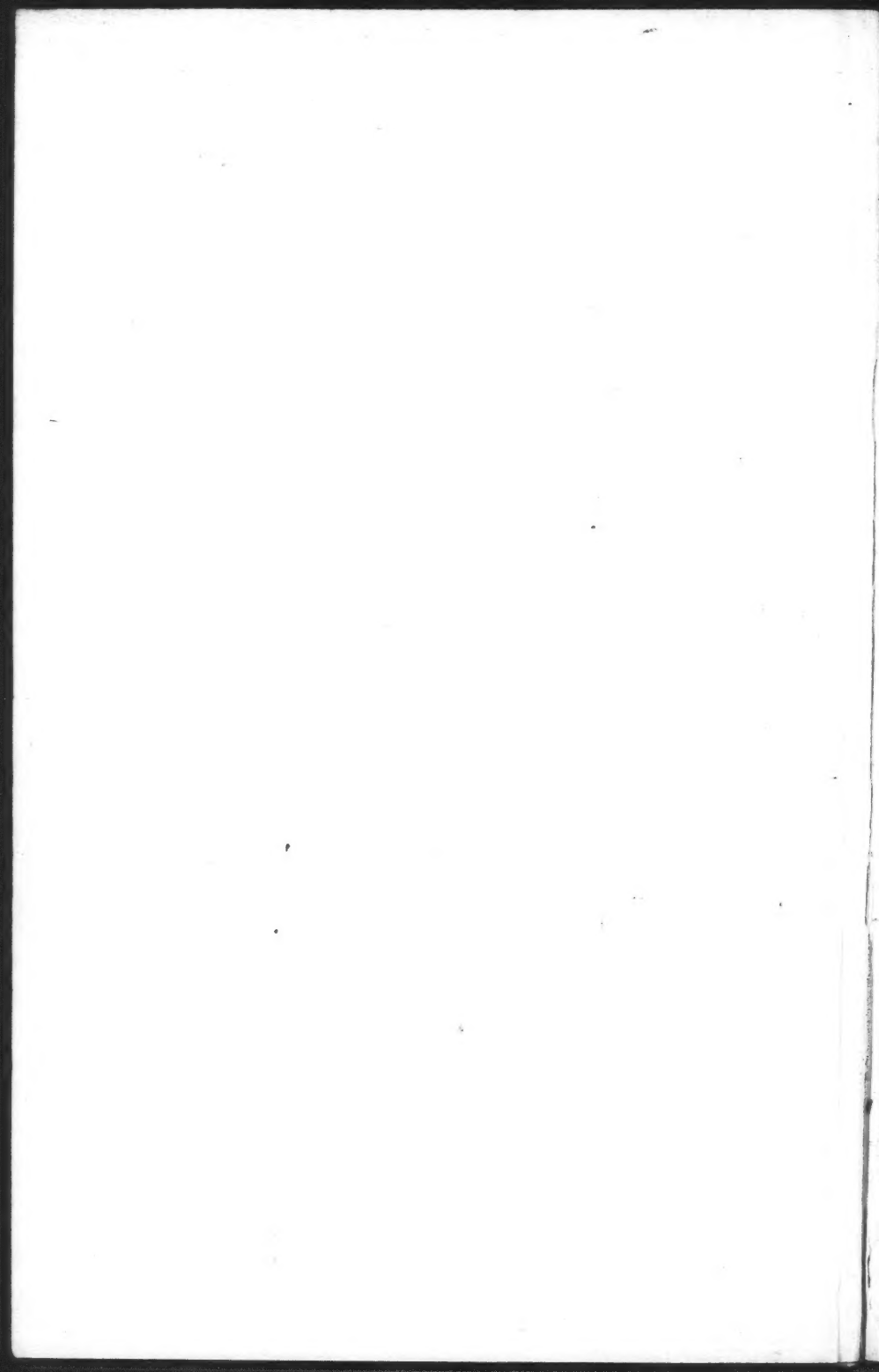
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